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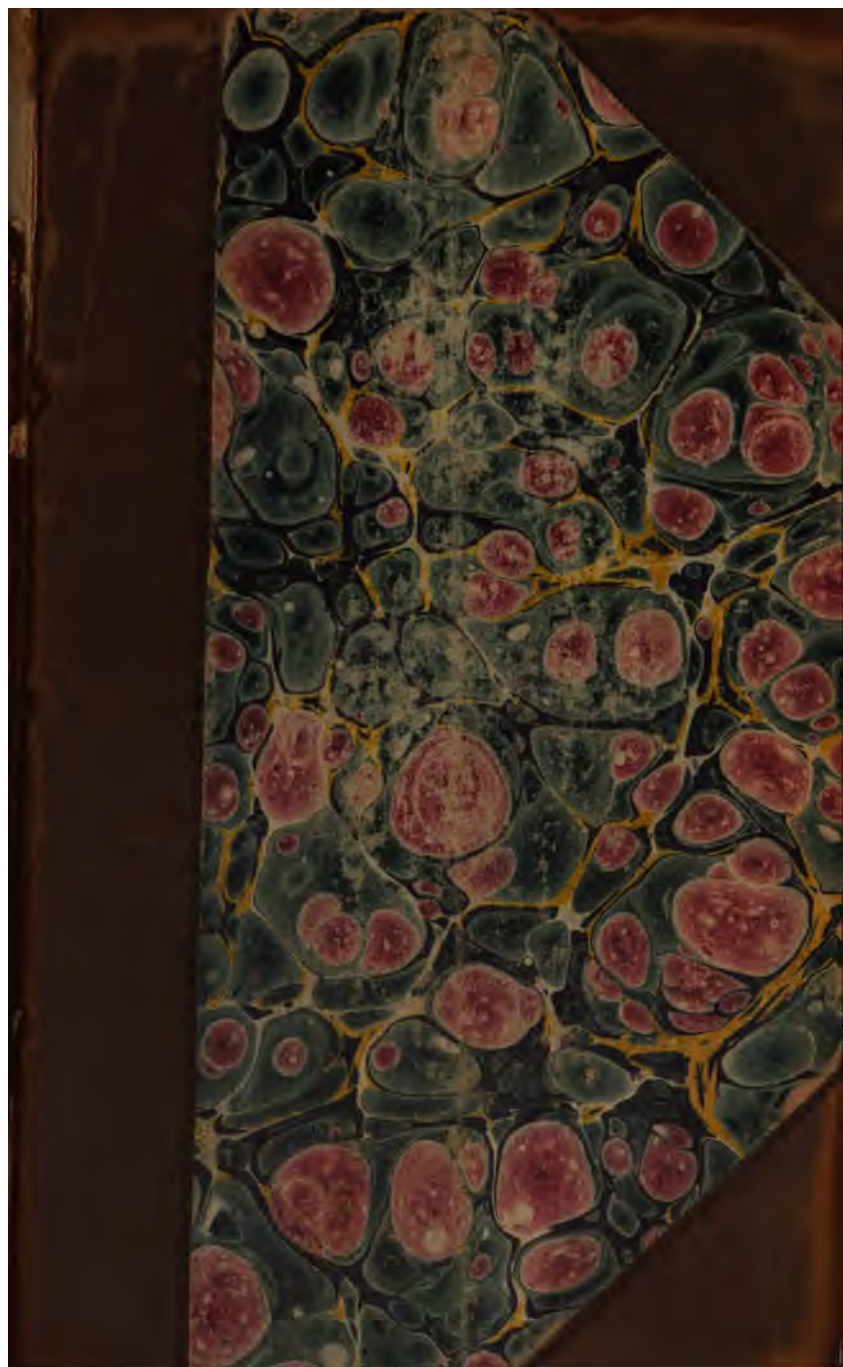
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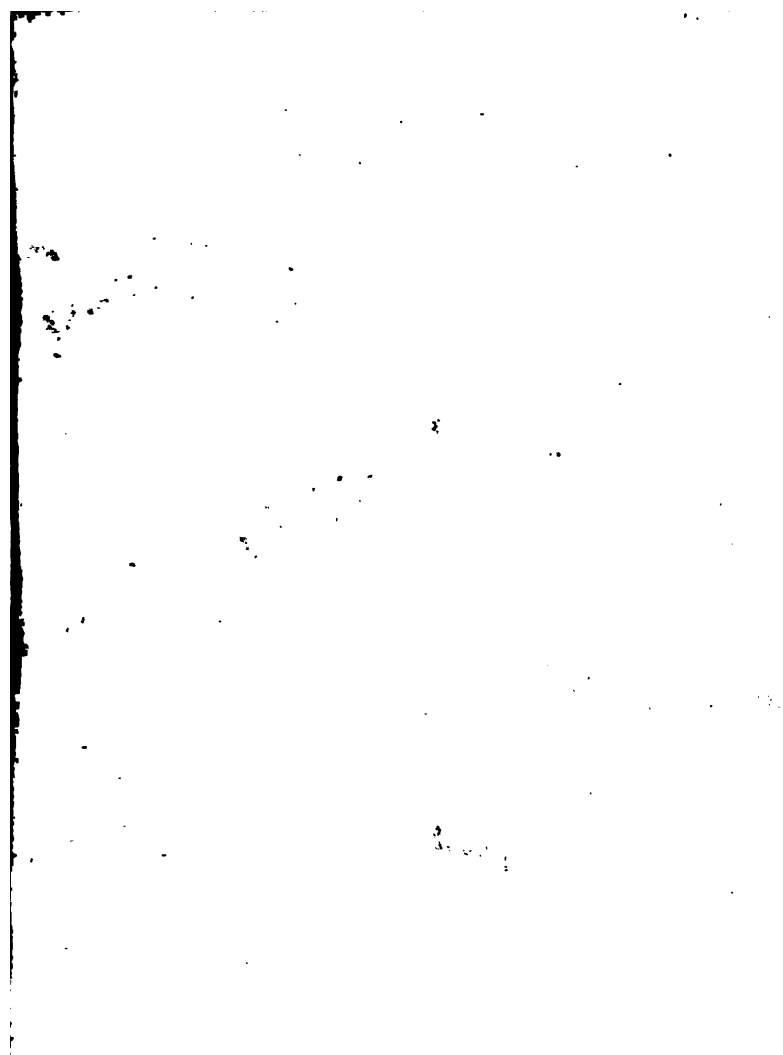
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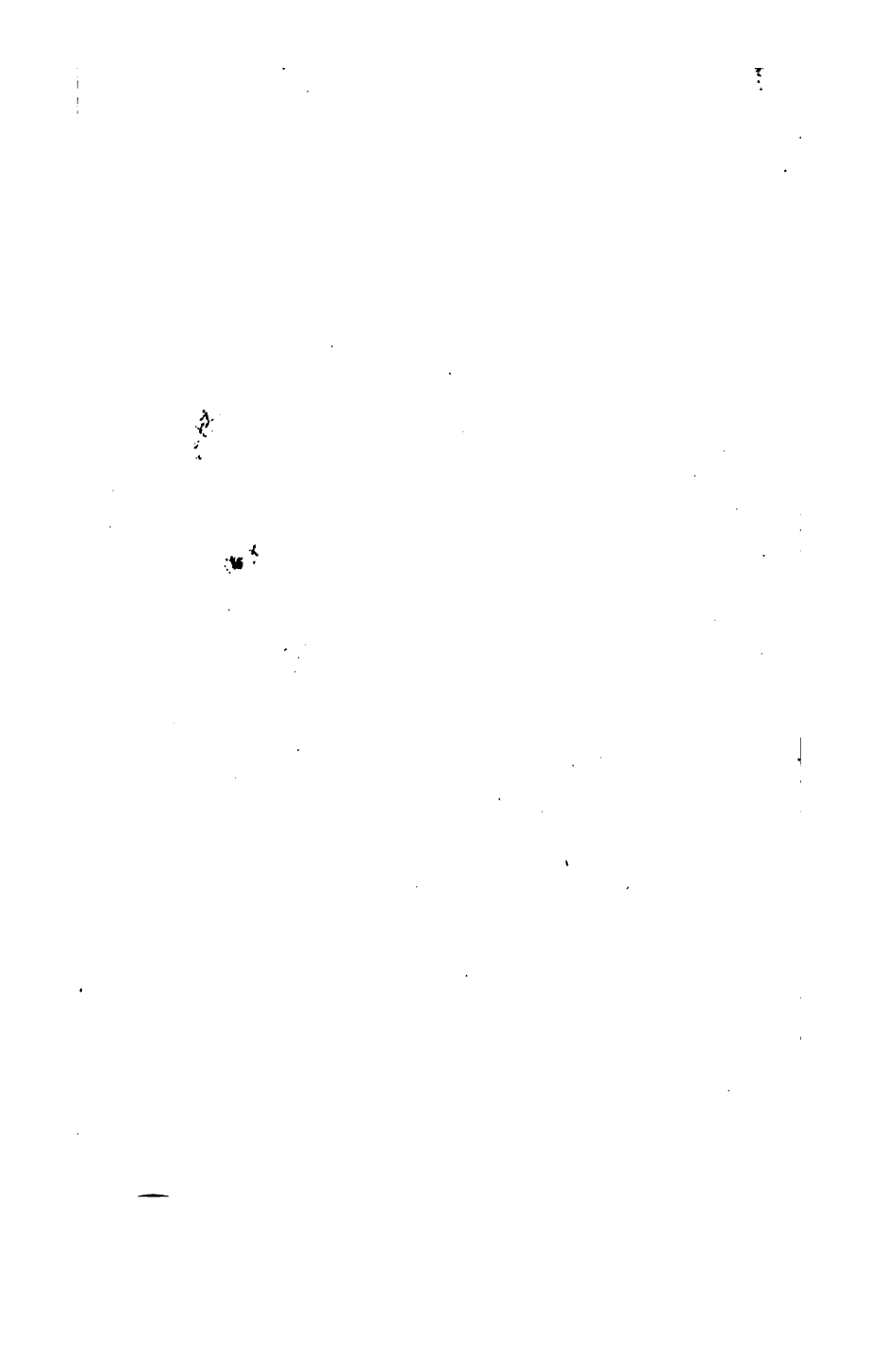
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A
SHORT DISCOURSE
ON THE
EVIDENCE
IN FAVOUR OF
CHRISTIANITY FROM REASON.

BY MRS. LANGFORD



PHIL. Shepherd, whence came these thoughts ?
They're not of sylvan tone ;
Thy woodland scenes and simple flocks
Ne'er taught these things.

SHEP. A waking pillow brought these thoughts ;
Sorrow stepped in 'tween me and sleep,
And when the restless spirit turned within
It met these reveries.

LONDON :
J. HATCHARD AND SON, 187, PICCADILLY.

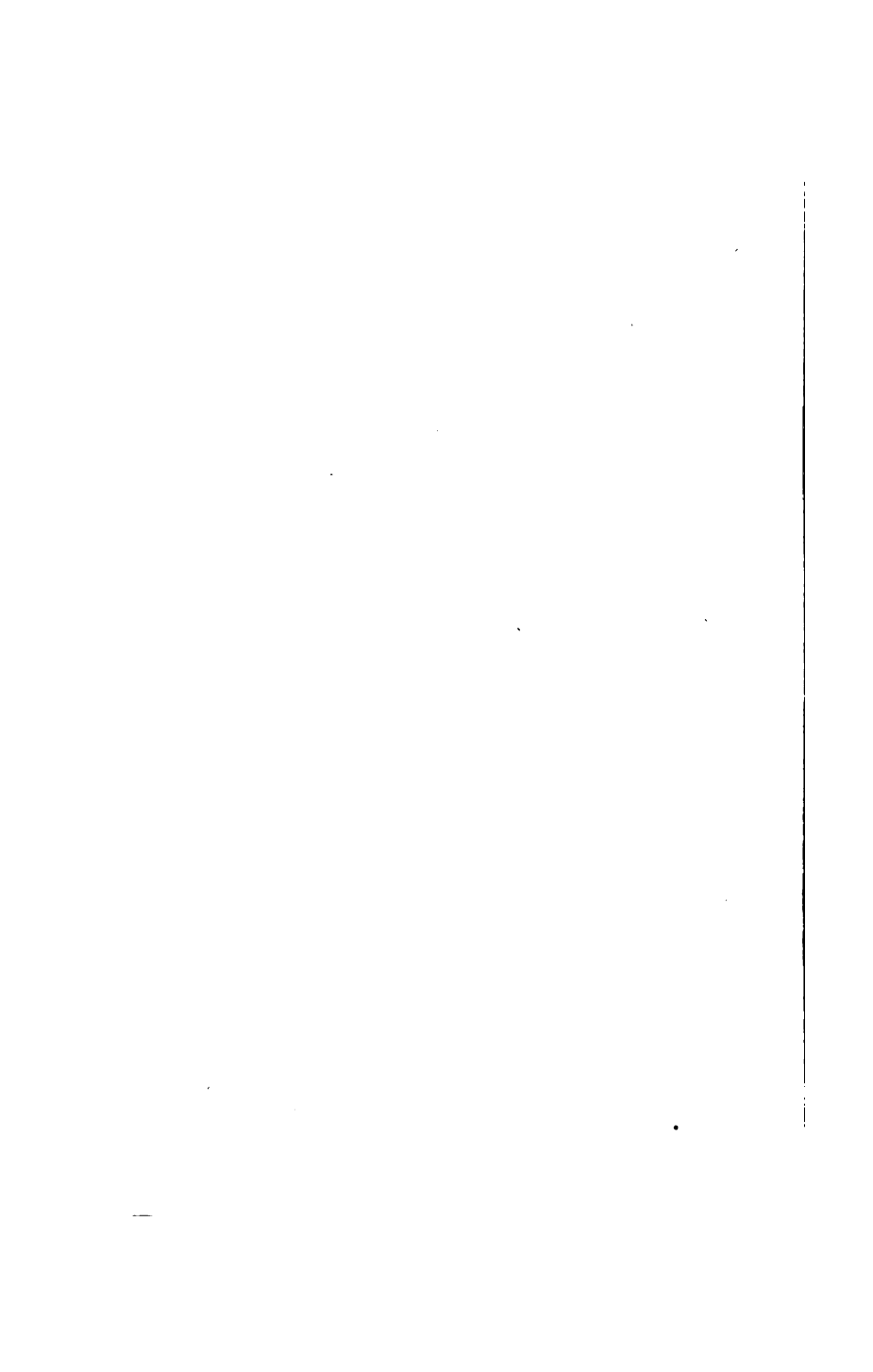
1837.

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LONDON
JOSEPH RICKERBY, PRINTER,
SHERBOURN LANE.

THE
FOLLOWING LITTLE WORK IS DEDICATED
TO
HER ROYAL HIGHNESS
THE DUCHESS OF KENT,
BY HER ROYAL HIGHNESS'S GRACIOUS PERMISSION,
BY
THE AUTHOR.

Canst thou behold these hills and not believe in heaven,
Or hast thou a power or energy that was not given?
Canst thou define thine origin, or why thou'rt here,
Whither thou goest, and what worlds to share ;
Canst thou explain why heaven such life should give
If in no world but this the soul must live ?
Say not 'tis mystery—heaven's works are plain;
Warp not the truth—believe, or else explain.
Call not the earth thy father, and then say
That man's existence is a little day,
That rises with the grass, and with the grass must fall ;
For if this mortal pilgrimage were all,
What means the vast machinery around
If with immortal purpose 'tis not crowned ?
Suffer the voice within thee to be heard,
A gracious message on thy dust conferred ;
That soothes the doubts where human wisdom shrinks
And answers mysteries where fainting nature sinks.



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A

SHORT DISCOURSE,

&c.

INTRODUCTORY.

SOME time ago, I believe a work like the following was published, giving evidence from reason in support of the revealed religion of Christ. The work never fell in my way, nor have I met with any account of it. Most of these pages have been written some years ; yet, though it is probable that in viewing the same subject, some of the same ideas may have presented themselves, yet it is not to be supposed that the whole may ; and as I conceive whatever can be offered to elucidate this topic, or strengthen the elucidations of others, as invaluable to the everlasting interests of mankind, I will not be deterred by any considerations of my own greater or less authorship, from offering this discussion to the eye of the public.

B

I am aware that argument has never made any converts in doctrinal disputations; and that very few are likely to approve of this little treatise, except those previously of my own opinion. Infidelity will regard these observations as flimsy and weak; but at the same time neither Locke nor Euclid could make half so many converts as Whitfield and Wesley:—that is to say, mankind are to be caught in general by their passions; and what enthusiasm did for them, novelty may do for me. And if this plain brief discourse only help to confirm a few into whose hands it may fall, I shall be abundantly rewarded.

In the process of reasoning, men usually grow proud of reason, which is one main cause why their arguments make so little impression on each other, and why each goes off the field victor in his own opinion. This is a formidable obstacle, but in this respect I stand upon even ground with all others.

Now reason consists in collating all the evidence on both sides the question; never silencing an adversary, but patiently gathering up the

induction from the whole postulata bearing on the predicate. It may be said that I argue entirely on one side: so I do; but I am open to reply; and it is for others to determine where I exceed or fall short of the consonances of reason, which is the nearest approach mortals can make to truth.

Some theorists have separated religion and reason entirely, supposing them to be incompatible, and that religion is derived from and supported by supernatural evidence and innate conviction; and that it must not attempt to derive any corroboration from reason. A definition affected by its adversaries to cover it with satire; and after thus precluding it from the aid of reason, they next attempt by sophistry to crumble it to the ground; like an able general who at last storms the works which he has long been undermining. The fanatic, with better intentions, equally injures its cause by also excluding what is its natural prop and legitimate defence; hoping all the while to raise the superstructure to the skies which he deprives of its foundation.

I confess I can show nothing beyond this world;

but there are a number of strong presumptions which conduct to very satisfactory conclusions respecting the relation of man to another more perfect state; and it will be the aim of these observations to show that religion admits the use of reason, is improved by it, and, in short, that the two are so blended, that neither is in perfection without the other. There is no question that men are endued with reason; and as nothing is made or given in vain, there is as little doubt that it is their duty to use that reason:—witness the stultifying idolatries they fall into without a pure religion, and the ameliorating effects Christianity has upon manners.

I grant that religion is publicly enough acknowledged in England, in this the nineteenth century, by great numbers of the community, although there are many sceptics: also, whoever adverts to the many fantastic forms religion is made to wear, will not think a few truisms respecting it entirely thrown away; for the doctrines of the Church of Christ are both perverted by fanaticism and violated by bold apostacy. Indeed the one

is a well-known conductor to the other ; for when religion has once quitted the platform of reason to ascend the tower of enthusiasm, she thence takes flight, and is no more seen ; and yesterday's rapture which called down the Deity to personal conference with the yet embodied spirit, to-day knows not where to find him, and even doubts whether that spirit or its Maker have an existence. If Methodism should triumph over pure religion in these realms, it is not difficult to foresee the end will be the same as it was in the sixteenth century ; that is, Deism will succeed : for too great a stress upon the spring of reason will produce a reaction in the opposite direction. Methodism has too much passion mixed with it : it naturally expends itself, and then there is nothing left. Socinianism steps into the void, as affording the most convenient refuge to that weak state of the mind, which the recoil of over excitement has an inevitable tendency to produce.

The natural imperfections of man's nature contribute to make Socinianism welcome. The weakness of his faculties binds him to sensible objects.

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Socinianism.

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conclude, to come to an end, is satisfactory to a
finite mind; because the infinite progression of
catenation is beyond its energy, and instead of
gratifying, exhausts it.

Though to conclude is easier than to go on, in
bearing the air of completion it appears to be the
more masterly thing, yet the faculties are capable
of drawing conclusions long before they are ca-
pable of giving the detail of their data. The
minds of infants are allowed to be full of con-
clusions, but they are incapable of reasoning.

He cannot dive into other worlds, he cannot penetrate the supernatural ; and in spite of the boasted elevation of his reason, his habits conspire to reduce him to the narrow sphere of his own tangibility ; and as revelation is not to be found there, or any ocular proofs of it, he is ready to shrink within that little speck, and to shut it out.

Socinianism is also that side of the question most congenial with weak understandings ; the superficial being prone to imagine that finding fault, doubting, and disproving is an act of superior discernment ; but reflecting men say that an argument, like a house, is more easily pulled down than built up. To connect a whole subject by demonstration, without material contradictions or gratuitous assumptions, is a far superior effort of mind, to pointing out little discrepancies, which, after all, perhaps invalidate not the general bearing, but which may be placed to the account of individual impression which always enters into individual production, and which might lose that incongruity, could the aspect under which it occurred be

faithfully delineated. But to disprove is flattering to almost all the sentiments which grow upon a man as he advances in life. Pride, which delights to bear down all before it; malignity, the child of that pride; vanity, that dotes upon its own conceptions, are all gratified by the self-reflected triumph of opposing and conquering. Hence treason and infidelity will ever be the vices of Socinianism.

A disapproval is a repartee, and the point which it carries is flattering to vanity. Another cause why disapproval is agreeable, is, that to finish, to conclude, to come to an end, is satisfactory to a finite mind; because the infinite progression of catenation is beyond its energy, and instead of gratifying, exhausts it.

Though to conclude is easier than to go on, in bearing the air of completion it appears to be the more masterly thing, yet the faculties are capable of drawing conclusions long before they are capable of giving the detail of their data. The minds of infants are allowed to be full of conclusions, but they are incapable of reasoning.

Conclusions from daily experience are very vivid, and the ablest logician would find it difficult to overturn such; but the order and relation of things, with all their consequences, come slowly; and most minds are able to arrive at very accurate conclusions, without ever being able to give reasons at all. This is called common sense; and it is a remarkable truth, that those who are most expert in reasoning are often least accurate in their conclusions, which causes the eccentricity of genius. The reason of this is, that tacit conclusions, or such as arise in the mind without detail, come from experience, and of course are truisms; that is, they tally with the facts of life, and therefore are not eccentric; notwithstanding truth is more strange than fiction, for the facts of life being common to all, that strangeness is lost in the experience of them being common to all; but the process of reasoning is very apt to lose sight of facts and to become theoretical. But though this is one state of these two qualities, or acts of the mind, yet there is another view which must not be forgotten. Reasoning and experience are

very capable of correcting each other, and when candour is used, seldom fail of doing so: the best state of understanding is then produced; the most luminous, extended, and certain discoveries both in ethics and science: and when this state is obtained, conclusions do not dazzle, or the detail of them carry away; but dogmas are cautiously investigated, and disproof loses that brilliant effect so dazzling to the superficial.

The Christian religion not only explains the Jewish traditions and prophecies satisfactorily, and also the oral traditions of many other nations who had faint glimpses of a Trinity, the flood, and a Messiah, but it is the only rational account which has ever been given of man's moral and physical situation here. He dies:—the Christian revelation informs him why he dies, by assuring him of an immortality, without which life would be a gift unworthy of a Deity. He is miserable:—Revelation teaches him that affliction is the soul's truest wealth, and that Christ is his comforter; and that though he may be long and hardly tried, there is no doubt of assistance in the

end, if he humbly and faithfully seek it.* He sins:—and the torments of conscience are unendurable to frail mortals; it is Christ alone who can plead.

And what can answer the urgent aspirations man feels after an hereafter but revealed religion? He cannot still the wellings of his soul after immortality; they rise in every mind, not in one or a few, therefore they are to be taken as a generic affection of the race. Reason considers their analogy, and finds it in revealed religion, and nowhere else. The Deist leaves them a mere passion, of no use either to reason or morality, consequently a mystery. Now the Deist has no right to mysteries. He sets out with rejecting revealed religion, upon the ground that it is full of mysteries, not to be explained by reason, by which he binds himself to explain every thing; and if he cannot give a reasonable explanation

* Doctor Samuel Johnson passed a life of affliction and doubt, accusing himself of being a great sinner, but at the last received a Divine impression of reconciliation with his Maker. (See Boswell's *Life of Johnson*.)

why man dies, why he is miserable, why he longs after immortality, he cannot revert to mystery; he cannot say these things are not to be accounted for by human reason. That reason which presumes to question the rational scheme of revealed religion, and to object to mysteries in the Christian dispensation, cannot fly back to mysteries to defend infidelity, but is bound to reconcile all difficulties by the force of reason, or else to take the same ground as the Christian; and if he admit of one mystery, why not of another? and thus he will leave no plea of disproof of the Christian revelation.

The Christian is not in the same predicament. He knows that the Deity has given him reason; he believes it to be his duty to use that reason; and when it will go no further, he believes it to be his duty to stop, and allow the rest to be mystery. That is, a thing hidden from reason. This is not a shuffling or evasion, or unfair dealing with the Deist. He voluntarily rejects mysteries, voluntarily takes his entire stand on the ground of reason, and is consequently bound to

reason throughout, as has been observed already, while the Christian uses his reason so far as it will go, and humbly allows the mysteries of Divine Omniscience for the rest.

I have not here changed the argument from reasonable evidence of revealed religion to mystery. Mysteries are facts,* and therefore reason demands that their validity shall be allowed. I am not going to prove any thing by mysteries at present, further than that the greatest logician must encounter them, must yield to them; therefore they prove their reality and the imbecility of human reason which I consider to be the most reason-

* Mysteries are an evidence of Deity. Man knows not the formation of matter, its duration; the fountain of life or why it ceases; where mind comes from, or where it goes at death; the destination of the comets, the ultimatum of the progression of the heavenly systems in their places in the universe, &c. It is most reasonable to refer them to an all-ruling power, who confers on them their regularity and variations, and who ordains the boundaries of all things; at which boundaries man must stop, recompensed and enriched by the treasure of humility, for we were too proud could our reason unravel all.

able conclusion of the whole: and after coming to this conclusion, the next step will be the reasonableness of revealed religion, as affording that support to the mind, its own powers do not possess. But though I go no further here, as mysteries are facts, I am not precluded from reasoning from them, when they bear upon the postulata which I may adduce; for facts must always be allowed to be part of the evidence of reason.

When a harmony can be perceived between mysteries and facts which rest upon them, it is philosophical to allow them; and as I have already observed, the Scriptures present the most rational view of the destination and phenomena of this life, and of an hereafter, which has ever yet been suggested to man, without so many mysteries to account for as any of the philosophers have burdened him with. And if there are physical mysteries and yet an evident consonance throughout God's works, shall not that consonance be recognized in moral mysteries? Nothing is fully explained to the finite understanding.

But the truth is, the Christian is not allowed by the Deist to argue from reason any more than from Scripture. When he offers reason, the Deist boldly says, "You cannot prove what you say, it is only what you are pleased to think;" then goes on to reason himself, though he can no more prove what he is pleased to think.

Deism, as I before observed, supports itself by the pride of the heart. When once a man undertakes to reason for himself, that is, to cast away revealed religion, he believes himself to be more exalted, philosophical, and enlightened than those who rely upon it, consequently his self-importance is concerned in maintaining his bias.

CHAPTER I.

OF REVEALED RELIGION.

REVEALED religion has never yet been attacked by fair, sober discussion. The greatest of its opponents were sure to draw some ludicrous picture or other of it by way of argument. If they began with gravity, they were sure to end with burlesque; and their converts are consequently generally among witlings who never dream of fair comparison and real research into analysis and synthesis, but who are carried away by pictorial effect—a drama; and having made what they consider a hit, grow contumacious, and let the argument fall into a sneer; but a sneer is not quite sufficient to conclude an argument, or supersede the use of another man's reason.

One reason given by the Deist for his contempt of revealed religion is, that it degrades the

understanding, by causing it to believe in what he esteems to be incongruities and absurdities, and thereby overshadowing the mental faculties with slavish submission, and confusing them by erroneous notions, which prevent their advance after truth : but which of these have the advantage in point of intellect—he who has a definite point to which he directs his rule of right and wrong, and who finds the insufficiency of human power assisted by a dependence of such purity as to elevate his virtues, and of such perspicuity as to corroborate his reason, or he who has his standard of right and wrong to fish out from the contradictions of mortal prejudice, or the scanty testimony of individual impression, and who, in all emergencies, is constantly involved in the weakness of his common frailty, without any help ?

The familiarity of the images of revelation has been objected to. They must be mad who can imagine that a Jew was God Almighty ; yet these same persons allow, and triumph in the idea, as an evidence of the purity of their philosophy, that God is present everywhere and exists in

every thing, down to a blade of grass, and the meanest insect that creeps thereon ; and is a Jew, a man, an intelligent being, so much meaner than that insect that the Almighty could not bear to be in him ?

No idea of familiarity can attach to God from breathing his spirit and laws from a human frame. To Him every thing is equally familiar and equally exalted ; for all is the work of His hand, all equally glorious in that sense, and in relation to the utility of the whole, and all equally remote from the majesty of the Godhead as compared with Omnipotence. Neither can the High One be degraded by entering into what appears to man the meanest of his works. What is infinite can suffer no diminution. A finite power, like that of mortals, can only suffer diminution, because their resources are limited, and they have nothing to supply that diminution from ; but the infinitude of the Godhead, in being competent always to supply itself, can suffer no diminution ; therefore God is equally august, equally majestic in the most familiar situation as in the most exalted ; and the idea of

familiarity, as relating to Him, can arise only from man's contracted notions, which borrow comparisons from his own affairs. An earthly monarch is obliged to use circumstance to denote his dignity, and even to seclude himself more or less, according to the autocracy of his power; but man falls far short in his conceptions of the infinitude of the Divine mind, when he attributes the same necessity to him.

He spoke to us by familiar agents, to suit the mundane conceptions, senses, and passions through which mortality has to struggle to prove itself worthy of Divine favour. Had Christ assumed a different form, and employed a superior mode of manifestation, man's sense and conceptions must have been altered to have received that exalted communication, and he could not have been the being that he is; for it is not to be supposed that with mortal faculties he could bear to behold the fulness of the immortal nature.* But suppose

* As to Moses, he lived in the age of miracles, and God gave him strength to resume himself. But deviations would not do for the whole human race, for then

that it had pleased the Almighty to have enabled man with his present faculties to have beheld the Deity, and to have heard him in all his majesty, would the man who had witnessed such glory, and whose conceptions had been carried to the knowledge of heaven, have delighted any more in the affairs of this life, or have been capable of its duties? There might be a total stop put to his exertions, and such a man, in such a case, might be no longer fit for this world. And this, no doubt, is the reason why futurity is darkened, that human struggles may go on through all the doubts and conflicts which are to qualify them in the end for eternal happiness: and how know mortals that what they take to be familiar and mean, is so? Beneath the plainest and the smallest there may be such powers of beauty and expansion, as to exceed human conceptions of sublimity, and to develope in one moment the commonest objects in ineffable radiance; nay, they may be shining gloriously to heavenly eyes, human beings would not be probationary, but accepted persons.

all the while man is forced to view them in the envelope of the dust.

Those who object to revelation as too miraculous for the rest of the course of nature, must recollect that every thing in nature is a continual miracle, as has been ably observed by another. No reflecting mind can suppose that the sublime simplicity of nature's apparent laws, and the inexhaustible complexity of their secret organization, goes on for a moment by their own efficacy; for supposing that the Deity communicated an efficacy to his works at their formation, sufficient to carry them on without his perpetual interference ostensibly perceptible, yet the strength of that efficacy is his continual miracle: and it matters not to him whether he work by the course of nature or out of the course of nature. There are no miracles to him: it is a term only applicable to the limited perceptions of man, which are permitted to behold only one series of his works; therefore he steps not out of his way, or works a miracle when he shows himself in a different manner; and it is no effort to him

to speak by his presence any more than by his works. A docile mind, imbued with piety, beholds his Maker in every object around him ; contemplates him in the harmony of the creation, and worships and admires him in the still order of the secret relations, the silent harmonies of the universe, with all the beautiful and wonderful synthesis of organization and its adaptation, too ineffable for human understanding.

Those philosophers who think that it is beneath the Deity to be his own immediate agent, walk a strange round of contradictions only to come back to the same point. Suppose that other agents are employed, from whom do they derive their energy ? If not from the Deity, there must be other powers or causes independent of him, and then he could no longer be Deity ; for however powerful a being may be, if he be not Omnipotent he is not Deity, but a subordinate agent ; and if the agents by which God works derive their energy from him, is he not in them ? that is, if his energy be in them, is he not in them ?

But whether God employ agents or work by his

own immediate energy, is of no moment to man, either in intellect or morality; it is one of those speculative points which it is the vice of metaphysics to discuss, and which perplexes finite minds with a maze of contradictions and absurdities which bring disgrace upon logic. I do not acknowledge this is quitting a subject I can make nothing of. I set out with saying, that it is our duty as reasonable beings to use our reason so far as it will go, and then to declare our weakness, and not attempt mysteries which only foil that reason, and which leave both Christian and Deist in an equal maze, only with this difference, that the Deist goes reasoning on till he entangles himself in a net of absurdities: for instance, Wolaston sending the soul to Heaven in a little balloon, whereas the Christian stops to admire in silent adoration the occult mechanism it is not permitted him to unfold, but the more perfect disclosure of which is perhaps to be a part of his immortal bliss, and the loss of which is perhaps to be part of the punishment of the wicked.

The Deist may sneer, but he stands precisely

on the same ground. He can no more unravel all he sees than the Christian; nay, to acknowledge that there is an Omniscient who directs all these things, though hidden from man, is a more luminous satisfaction to the faculties, than to attempt an explanation which only leads to error and presumption.

Reason affords many glimpses of immortality, moral sense, &c., yet they need the developement of revelation. And as these glimpses are too powerful to be got rid of, and too desultory to come to a conclusion of themselves, a rational presumption follows in favour of revelation, as belonging to the harmony of the utilities of the scheme of Providence, who makes nothing in vain, and who has given man so much reason as enables him to perceive that he wants the aid of superior power, and then helps him out by revelation. Thus revelation is substantiated by the insufficiency of human reason, which renders it a necessary opposite to Deism, the absence of the one producing the presence of the other.

Deism in being the mere result of reason,

leaves out the impulses of the heart, and excludes imagination ; which renders it too cold for man, who is formed of those threefold principles : hence Deism renders him supercilious, overbearing, uncharitable in health ; desolate, prostrate, hopeless in sickness. The Pagan superstition was the undivided effect of imagination, excluding reason ; it consequently called up the passions too powerfully, producing licentiousness. Christianity bears the stamp of its divinity in according with the designs of the Creator, who gave man reason, imagination, and feeling ; these principles are blended in such due subservience in the Christian religion, that it alone, above all others, is marked by a true philosophical character, and alone has a beneficial effect on the mind of man.

Nor is it to be supposed that the great Fountain of truth and justice would allow his name to go forth from age to age in the garb of falsehood. That the religion of Christ has been many centuries in the world, is by the permission of God. Many men eminent for probity and intellect have died in it, professing the great assurance and

consolation they anticipated in a glorious resurrection, according to the promises of the gospel—strong presumption that the Author of all truth and purity puts that seal upon his word.* So did the religion of Confucius, of Budha, of Zoroaster, of Mahomet, and even of Cham Chi Tho Ghu, and Wolcondu, continue many centuries; but they continued chiefly among barbarians without a ray of reason, and even among the best of them, never solaced or improved human nature; while the Christian doctrine is acknowledged in the most enlightened countries, and civilizes wherever it goes; and the fierce Zealander no longer devours his enemy or his child.

* I believe Landaff has this argument.

CHAPTER II.

FURTHER PROOFS OF THE REASONABLE
PRESUMPTION OF THE AUTHENTICITY OF
REVEALED RELIGION, FROM ITS UTILITY.

WITHOUT revealed religion morality would want her right hand ; and though, thus mutilated, she might guide in a calm, she would have no strength to support us in a storm : and since storms are what we are to expect, it is highly reasonable to suppose that He who has ordered every thing, should have provided for those storms ; and when we find ordinations agreeing in their purposes with the constitution and wants of the beings to whom they relate, it is a fit and proper act of reason to conclude that we have glanced so far into their nature, or truth, as we are able to recognise those consonances.

Nothing can be more certain than that the

passions of man require some powerful check, something that comes to him in an express form,—that is certain, and which he cannot mistake; and what that must be, neither Rhadamanthus or Plato could ever determine. It requires the aid of revealed religion. If he be left to reason only, he will have as many codes of right as individual impression, and all too slight to curb the wanderings of mortal frailty. Deism is too distant to come down to the continual occasions, the daily of life. In order to be enabled to practise what is right, he must have a guide at once powerful and definite; circumstances which cannot jointly be found except in revealed religion: it is reasonable therefore to suppose, that the great utility of revelation is one of the natural positive proofs of its validity. And here it is, at this point, that reason leads to religion, and that religion corroborates reason.

Man, bewildered by passions, with a reason too weak to contend with them, and left in the hopeless struggle, is but an imperfect picture, which

would leave him stultified by useless mysteries,* too obscure for human comprehension ; but man, feeling the limits of his reason, and forced to return to his Creator for aid, is a rational and perfect idea, that elevates his nature, by teaching him humbly to seek and gratefully to acknowledge the protection of his heavenly Father, thereby enriching his mind with the beautiful virtues of piety and humility ; which is probably as perfect a state as a created being is capable of. Were all so

* I have elsewhere said, that mysteries have a salutary effect in bringing man to an humble sense of his own inferiority, and in being an evidence of a superior intelligence, inscrutable to his feeble faculties : but he does not arrive at this point without having been led on, step by step, by reason, to recognise the beautiful consistency of divine appointments, which all admirably coincide with his moral duties, and his moral duties with his physical conformation ; the climax and moral of which duties is death. And here it is that revealed religion fitly fills the chasm which nature leaves, and reason is satisfied with the harmony of the whole. But without going step by step with reason to revealed religion, there would be no such harmony : mysteries would remain a useless part of the perceptions even of the best regulated minds, and to the ill-regulated, they would only add to the bewilderment of passion.

rational as to be able to guide themselves, men might forget to approach their Creator, and to bow down their hearts in that continual dependence which realises the perfection of Divine plans in establishing so admirable a link between himself and the highest of his creatures.

But if revealed religion be necessary to help out human reason, why was it delayed for so many ages?—why was it not given to man at the first, with a strength of evidence not to be questioned? Then he would have had nothing else to have done, but to have turned to it under all difficulties, and his path had never been thus perplexed. Surely that very beneficence which is an argument why it should be given, is an argument also why it should have been given at first.

Whenever man enters upon the ways of Providence, with a *why*, I apprehend that he loses sight both of wisdom and virtue, and gets entangled in a net of wild speculations, bound together by pride. I must not say that the Christian believes that man had this revelation at first,—that Adam had it, and that his progeny lost it by

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transgression; that is an explanation I am precluded from; but I may say, had this perception been always too clear for doubt, man's state would not have been what it is; and the philosopher knows that along with one alteration every thing must have been altered—his faculties, and the objects upon which he exercises them; so that to demand why he had not a clearer manifestation of futurity which no sceptic would question, is to ask why he has five senses, why he walks, why there is a sun, moon, and stars, and why the earth is covered with grass. Every thing in nature, the stones and rivers, the herbs, and the faculties of man, his passions, and the situation of his reason with respect to revealed religion, are fitted to each other and to the whole, and cannot be disjoined to give perfection to one thing above the rest.

But the first man and woman had this revelation, and they were human and lived; therefore their posterity might have it in their human state:—but their state is not like that of their first parents. They had food and every thing they required

without labour; there were none to invade them, or cause fear or contention, nor had they any diseases or wants, nor were they originally mortal, like their posterity; therefore they were altogether in a more heavenly state than succeeding generations, and fitter for communion with the etherial; and the loss of that communion was part of the punishment of their disobedience in that state.

Why was not revealed religion given to savages? What is to become of infants who die before they can comprehend?—of idiots?—of those who are born deaf and dumb? They have never been called to the light of truth, therefore Heaven, in its unquestionable counsels, may have another rule of judgment for them. It is we who have been called, who have had the light of truth offered, who ought to open our reason to conviction, and to whom sin will be imputed if we do not. The deplorable ignorance of savages, the death of infants before they can be instructed, the deaf and dumb, &c. may be the consequences of original sin, and meant for a warning and punishment.

But if Heaven is to have an especial rule of mercy for savages, for infants, for idiots, for those who are born deaf and dumb, &c. then they are the favoured of the earth, and then it is a good thing to be a savage, to die in infancy, to be an idiot, deaf and dumb, &c. This is a vicious question, because it is beyond the reach of human faculties, and only leads to presumptuous criticism of what, after all, remains inscrutable as it was before. All I can say is, that so far as my faith or opinion is concerned, I believe that all those objects are considered by divine mercy; but as reason is the most perfect natural gift man can receive, and reason properly used leads to virtue and religion, I do not agree that even if coupled with trials, it is bad for the being who is to receive the result of those ennobling trials, but that such an one will find, in the end, his portion made equal with the imperfect beings who come under exemption from trials.*

* If revealed religion be necessary to the moral welfare of created beings, why did not Christ visit all the planets as well as ours? How do we know that he did

Were revealed religion rendered any plainer, our activities would assume a different direction. The affairs of life might be forsaken for contemplation,* or despised in comparison with futurity ; whereas, by leaving that conviction an aspiration, rather than a certainty, our virtues are excited by hope sustaining their ordeal, which leads us to prayer, and adds humility and gratitude to their value. And by not giving revelation at first, that is, by not renewing it immediately after the fall of man, the inefficacy of reason was more plainly

not? And as there is such a country as Loochoo even in this corrupt globe, how know we that the rest of the planets are in such a state as to require such a visit? And, moreover, how know we, to a philosophical certainty, that those planets are peopled at all, for we now find that the moon has no atmosphere, and therefore cannot be inhabited ; and Mercury is too hot, and Saturn too cold, and there may be something inimical to life in them all, if we could only come nearer to them. But such speculative questions as this come under the head of vain and unprofitable curiosity.

* We find the learned Stagyrte falling into this error, saying that the perfection of man requires that he should be so absorbed in heavenly contemplation as not to notice his own affairs but to be ignorant of them.

shown. Had we never been without revealed religion, we might have assumed the knowledge of it as part of ourselves, and thus have been deprived of the sense of our imperfection, which, upon the present plan of things, is so indisputably shown, and which conviction we find to be one of the most valuable foundations of virtue which we possess.

The moral utilities attached to revealed religion must not be overlooked, among the legitimate proofs of its validity. A sublime imagination may talk in the most elevated manner of the clear rules of reason, unclouded by prejudices, and unfettered by incredible legends: the fact is, that mankind can neither develope or support the moral sense by any other aid than that of religion; and looking at the history of the world, that religion, the religion of Christ. I do not deny that there are virtuous and amiable individuals of every code; but let historical facts decide where the sum of public virtue lies; that is, among what nations the most public support is given to the most virtuous rules of life. And to what are

those nations indebted but to the Divine influence of revelation? Universal convenience may be the ostensible beginning of mutual compact, which may hold so far as laws and interest extend; but there is no man so uninformed as not to be aware that by far the greater number of social transactions escape the definition, and of course the cognizance of the law, in the most despotic countries; and that the wellbeing of society must essentially depend upon that private sense of right and wrong, called conscience, which I fancy will be found to be better defined in the Christian code than in any other. Society is indispensable to man: the laws of society rest upon that moral sense which best agrees with the religion of Christ; therefore the religion of Christ produces the greatest perfection of man.

I will grant that the moral sense naturally belongs to all men, as well as the locomotive faculties; but without revealed religion it comes not to perfection. In speculation the Deist can pourtray rules of great purity; but he has nothing to fix them, to give them force, to make them avail in

the very hour when they are most wanted. Hence his virtues go no further than disposition; where that is good, his conduct triumphs; he fancies himself happy by the light of reason, and looks down with pity or contempt upon the infatuated man, who derives his support from what he considers useless and ridiculous forgeries. But his trials pass not so:—reason is then no longer heard; a storm too violent for her weak and distant efforts confuses his senses, and he begins to lament the frailty of human nature. The Christian knows that frailty beforehand, but he combats it by other helps than those of reason. In the din of passion the conviction of futurity reclaims his bewilderment, and affords him a guide he never would otherwise have acquired. While a man is merely theorising on virtue, reason will show him rules with very great beauty and facility, especially if the instruction be for another; but when the situation is his own, it can only be sustained by an influence, strong, active, and present like itself. In short, the rage of the feelings can only be opposed by the feelings themselves; and no con-

sideration accords with this end so fitly as religion. Hope and fear here meet together, and are ready to act ; and if religion be impressed upon the mind in the legible characters of revelation, its influence will be able to counteract the base and violent passions, by the actual contact of hope and fear ; whereas reason without something actual, is like a friend with whom we hold only a paper correspondence. The infinite humours and uncontrollable propensities of man require a firmer rein ; the present requires the present, and revealed religion is able to lay hold of the passions themselves, and to subdue them by their own agency.

I assert not that the human mind can always be kept perfectly subdued by religion ; but where religion is imprinted upon it, the rules of virtue will be more readily and clearly recognised than without it ; and an individual so impressed, will be better prepared for the practice of those rules : and since it is allowed that Christianity has ameliorated the character of man wherever it has been established, when it is better established, which the social state of the world authorizes us to ex-

pect, it is devoutly to be hoped that the human character will proportionally improve.

It ought to be recollected that the Deity is as wise as he is benevolent; and since he has endued man with passions that defy the control of reason; and which require a stronger curb, it is highly consistent with the attributes of Deity to suppose that he has granted that curb. He manifests himself in every part of the creation, by the surprising order and beauty of the whole; and is it irrational to suppose, that to that being to whom he has granted intelligence, he should speak yet a little plainer, since in so doing his happiness and virtue is best secured? Left to the mere light of reason, and the uncorroborated evidence of nature, man is but a bewildered being, disturbed by passion and misled by speculation: revealed religion points out his track at once, and supports him at those weak points at which reason alone sinks beneath the too powerful weight of nature.

CHAPTER III.

OF THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST.

JESUS CHRIST had something very distinctive, both in his credentials and mission, from all other prophets. He was the first who renounced this world; the first who announced such splendid truths under so humble circumstances. His morality is the only system ever promulgated worthy of the gentleman and the scholar. Philosophers have handed down much gold, but much dross adhered to it: poets, romanciers, and novelists have breathed the sickly sentimentality of overstrained refinement, or have exalted partial public virtues at the expense of all others; but no one ever hit the mean, the truth, the force of reason so satisfactorily as Jesus Christ. He alone is so clear as to visit the secret conscience of every

man; so just as to convict, so rational that sophists cannot evade him.

The distinguishing character of his sublime and rational principles are peace, comprehending brotherly love, and humility. Justice is a very luminous principle, and will go far in civilization; but humility strikes at the root of all our passions at once. Many other lawgivers have hit upon justice, and even reduced it to very consistent rules; but no man upon earth ever hit upon the principle of humility, which is the most extensive of all others, but Christ. Therefore his morality is a distinctive morality. Roman jurisprudence directs our judgment in civil law, which is the foundation of manners; yet the morality of the Romans was very inferior to that of the Gospel. Many nations had attained to the arts and sciences, and had reached a high degree of civilization, but none of them could devise such excellent rules as our Saviour. The learning of the Egyptian, the wit of the Arabian, the subtlety of the Grecian, could never strike out any thing radically effectual in their doctrines; and if all

the learning of all the East was inadequate to this end, from what could the superiority of Christ proceed? He received no education; he was known to teach, instead of learning; he practised the time-consuming occupations of humble life; yet, at an early period, he surpassed all whom the world ever produced, or has produced since. The learning of the Egyptian, the wit of the Arabian, the subtlety of the Greek, terminated in things common to many others; but the morality of Jesus Christ stands by itself: he therefore had something in his mind different from the conceptions of men; and it is neither unreasonable nor incredible to suppose this something must have been divine; for though it would be unreasonable and incredible to account for every partial phenomenon by the intervention of a miracle, yet where a number of circumstances unite to the same point, reason is bound to notice the whole, and the tendency of the whole; and the whole character, qualities, and actions of Jesus Christ were above human nature, and therefore miraculous. The

purity of his doctrine, in surpassing mortal purity, was a divine purity, and attests that the order of his mind was not reducible to the human standard. Advert only to the doctrines of the most learned of men;—the logical subtleties with which they are constructed are excellently ingenious, and excite admiration for the approaching dogma; but when the corollary is summed up, what a fall, what a prostration of the divine gift of reason! Let any one glance over the Philosophical Dictionary, a little work comprising the abstract of the theories, and opinions of metaphysicians, and he will find that logic is but the weedy field of folly; a pretty plain proof, that though man has ingenuity enough to play with subtle distinctions, yet, when he comes to the combination of principles, his understanding stops, and nothing but his presumption goes on. It is Revelation alone that is able to develope principles.

All the Jews, and many others have objected to the Divinity of Christ, because he came, not with that kind of splendour which human sense recog-

nises : but he was not mean ; his dignity must not be measured by comparison with human grandeur. There is more grandeur in simplicity, temperance, and purity, than in all the pomps and luxuries of human power.

Besides, the heavens did not open and send down the Messiah, ostensibly to the gaze of the multitude. He arose among men as a second mean, and second means are always trivial and common. Christ came to teach lowliness, therefore was he lowly. Had he come with more indisputable manifestations, this life would no longer have been a scene of probation, but of moral necessity, which would have interfered with man's free agency, and have entirely altered the nature of his entity, of his conceptions of Divine justice, and of his reward in a future state.

There is nothing mean in reality. All is connected with all, and in that connexion is grand. It is the imbecility of man's faculties which gives him the idea of meanness. The smallest atom contains a principle, and principles result from the

mind of the Deity* and are far above mortal comprehensions, much less his control. It is this mysterious catenation of infinite wisdom that makes every thing sublime in its production, its relations, and its purpose.

And though Christ appeared in outward form only as a man, is not a man a miracle in himself? Does he understand the breath of his own life, the full extent of his own secret relations with futurity,—the immortal spirit which is in him? All Deists will not disallow these things, but assert that the soul is a scintillation or spark of the Deity. If the Deity then commonly impart these small portions of himself, where is the difficulty of supposing that he imparted a larger or more perfect portion in Christ?

* Man has no principles of his own. He can develope sometimes the principles of the Divine mind to a partial extent, but he understands nothing perfunctorily; and though he can in some instances recombine, he has no original principles. If he had, he could create.

CHAPTER IV.

OF THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

IF immortality be in the least doubted, Christianity instantly totters ; therefore all the views in which the evidence of it can appear, cannot be too minutely considered. Deism is constantly at variance with immortality, though the ancients must have had strong conceptions of futurity, and the immortality of the soul, when they imagined the Hades, and talked of Charon ferrying over the souls of the departed,—of Orpheus fetching Euridice back from the shades below, &c.; but the Deist falls far below that, for his doctrine has a strong inward tendency to destroy such belief. Some of that class may set out with it, and some may end with it ; but the general effect of Deism is to lead men to disallow the immortality of the soul ; and as Deism does not agree with reason

(vide the whole of the foregoing reasoning) and immortality does, a distinct proof is here obtained in favour of the latter.

The belief of immortality is necessary to complete the moral sense, or what is termed the force of conscience. Deprived of the prospect of futurity, the responsibility of the moral sense would grow very weak. The power of Virtue might operate in some favoured minds, by the force of a happy disposition ; but nothing can be more evident than that the majority would never acknowledge her, unless she could summon them to a tribunal more searching, more scrutinizing than any which this world affords. Under the belief of rising from the grave with this life's deeds all written upon him, the most depraved cannot avoid some compunctuous pauses in the career of vice; and also the most miserable will not fail to meet with some alleviation, some gleamy interval of hope. The light of reason may be extolled, and Deists may think to loose her from shackles, by separating her from religion; but whenever she casts that staff away, and attempts to stand alone,

she triumphs only in speculation to mourn in experience. It is the future, the day which is to come, the reckoning hereafter, that feeds the worm of conscience, that chains the hand of vice, that composes the heart of man to obedience, and then consoles him with what is best adapted to his weakness—the sense of a rational dependence on a power far superior to any thing which his own reason or virtue can offer.

Yet the Deist will say—You cannot show me a soul, or spirit, or any positive proof of any such thing; you assume such entities, for even your Scripture does not pretend to define them; therefore whatever is asserted relative to them can be answered by counter assertion; and since it is impossible to behold or ascertain those entities by the natural faculties, it is impossible to believe them with the natural faculties.—A very vague argument. If by the natural faculties the five senses are meant, I grant that their power extends no further than as recipient agents, and that they do not compare and induct by themselves; but the mental faculties are also as much a part of

man, and as natural to him as his five senses, and with them he can compare, induct, and believe in such induction. I will allow that the five senses come first, with or without education; but I also aver that it is the natural faculty, or nature of man—I speak of him collectively—to reason from the evidence of his senses; and that he, that is, his species, his aggregate mass, appropriate that reasoning to their understanding.*

Man cannot, in the nature of things, in these days have sensible proofs of souls, or spirits, because the senses with which he is constituted do not admit of any thing like cognizance of any world but this; he is therefore excluded from all experimental contact with other worlds, unless God would be pleased to work miracles, which he is told no longer to look for; but if no man can show by sensible demonstration that there are souls, no man can show by sensible demonstration that there are not souls. If no one ever came from the grave to say they exist, no one ever came from the grave to say they do not exist.

* See on Education, page 65.

The evidence of reason affords as much presumption for as against the question. It is a fact that the whole world is above man's comprehension. He cannot conceive how the least entity came into existence, or how it goes out of it; nor, though many ingenious, and some very presumptuous researches and explications have been made of the wonders of creation,* has any philosopher been able to point out clearly what life is; therefore it is reasonable to conclude that it proceeds from a great invisible, incomprehensible cause; from him who reigned eternally before the worlds were, in the light of truth, beholding all his everlasting purposes complete in himself, with the fleeting generations of men passing in his review before their existence.

Still the Deist cries, Show me something I can lay hold of by my five senses, and that I will believe; but theories without facts are no proofs.

* As to the thinking faculty residing in the eighth pair of nerves, it may in dogs; but the thinking faculty and the soul are two distinct things in man. The thinking faculty passively consents to sin—the soul reproaches him for sin.

Not to repeat that internal evidence is as much a fact as external evidence, I observe further, that those five senses fail one after another, and that, in their most perfect state, they are subject to illusions, and that matter from which alone they are capable of receiving impression is as fallible as variable, as futile as themselves; whilst internal evidence, the faculties, propensities, wants and dependencies, consonances, and capabilities of man rise above this world, and strengthen in proportion as age advances, till the mortal seems shelling off, and leaving the immortal more disclosed, more invigorated. The springing soul can no longer be confined to this world, but as things drop out of the hands, and the feet refuse to hold the ground, the phoenix rises from its ashes, and soars beyond the empyreum for its home. Is there no proof in this to a man who will reason with his mind, as well as with his body?

Perhaps the Deist will esteem this to be rant; but will he deny that law of nature by which, when she is quite exhausted, almost all men at the last are willing to die?—that is, they seek for

rest elsewhere. The Deist will perhaps say, The body is willing to sink into the earth ;—I say, it is the spirit which is leaping out of its prison. It is the soul that asks for its better, its more enduring resting-place. Then says the Deist, Good and bad men are alike at that point.—Supposing they are, which however is not always the case, it is the soul which is willing to go; the immortal principle that never errs, but always reproves a man for his evil deeds.

CHAPTER V.

OF INTERNAL EVIDENCE, AS WELL AS THAT
OF THE SENSES, OF IMMORTALITY.

THE existence of soul is apparent from its effects, offices, agreements, and rationale, which correspond with all the purposes, powers, and duties of life. If the existence of God can be proved by his works, so also can the existence of the soul be proved by its effects, offices, agreements, and rationale.

Every man has the evidence of soul within himself,—mental as well as physical. His mental evidences distinguish him from the brute creation, and though his physical construction of course has a general conformity with animal life, the results to which he comes are very different. Man and the brute creation have the same five natural senses in common, but man makes very different

observations by the help of his five senses from the brutes, and consequently arrives at very different conclusions; therefore, there is something very different in the mind of man from that of brutes, by which he arrives at those different conclusions.*

If it be said that reason and the senses are so inseparably connected in man, that he knows nothing even of Deity himself but through the medium of his senses, I agree; but the mortal origin and perishability of the senses do not impugn

* The observations and reflections of man differ essentially from those of brutes. Brutes can distinguish light from darkness, heat from cold, noxious from innoxious herbs, and most animals will find their way home when taken to a distance: a dog will sometimes fall into a passion with a hill or the horizon, and a wolf will bay the moon; whilst the natural unvarying instinct of animals is far superior to that of man; but all will not do against the broad fact, that they never advance beyond a certain boundary, but that all their efforts may be pronounced to be confined to the immediate objects necessary to their momentary wants; whilst the mind of man is never at rest, but passes from object to object, transcends this world, and forms combinations and produces results which he reiterates through life, and finally transmits to posterity, who are capable of taking them up.

the conclusions to which their evidence leads; for if that were the case, man would be equally incapable of moral impressions or any of the data of life, and his mind would be reduced to the standard of that of the brutes. The mortal part can be evidence of the immortal part. The immortal part will have to give evidence of the mortal part hereafter; and by the same rule, the mortal part can bear evidence of the immortal part here. As to perishable materials not being commensurate with, and therefore their evidence not being applicable to eternity and divinity, by what power were those perishable materials called into existence? As well might it be said, God did not make mortals, because they perish and he lives for ever. He not only made them, but he suffers them to be evidence in themselves of his existence, and of their connexion with him here and hereafter; therefore, in giving the physical evidence of man a place among his mental evidences, I do not destroy, or confuse, or reduce his mental evidences of the immortal principle, seeing that his mortal and immortal principles act and

react upon each other, and that he is a compound being of mental and physical powers, faculties, or properties which are so intimately blended both in co-existence and reciprocity of action, that in estimating his character, or coming to any deduction from the data he affords, no philosophical conclusions can be obtained without taking his mental and physical nature together.

This argument is a very distinct one from that against the position that man is not immortal, but that his race is, and that the earth is, eternal. There I say mortality cannot be the basis of immortality; here I say mortality and immortality, that is the principles of both, are so intimately united, that they can and must be evidence of each other: but evidence of a principle after it is produced, is a very different thing from the production of that principle.

I shall attempt to show that all the qualities of man, taken collectively and respectively, afford indisputable evidence of his affinity with the existence and immortality of the soul. His natural

or animal senses bring him perceptions, which, with the help of his mental reflections afford him,

1. FACULTIES ;
2. PROPENSITIES ;
3. WANTS AND DEPENDENCIES ;
4. CONSONANCES ;
5. CAPABILITIES ;

which plainly conduct him to his Maker, and to a future state; for those powers and qualities do not at all agree with the essence and condition of a perishable being. Accordingly none of them, except the natural senses, are to be observed in brutes; and the attributes which arise from them are among the strongest natural evidences of a link with immortality, at the same time they detach and lead away from time and sense.

These attributes of the soul to which they conduct are,

1. THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF EXISTENCE AND
THE NOTION OF DEATH ;
2. THE KNOWLEDGE OF DEITY ;
3. THE NOTION OF IMMORTALITY ;

4. THE IMPULSE TO PRAYER AND WORSHIP ;

5. THE MORAL SENSE ;

6. THE PERCEPTION OF INFINITY ;

all which knowledge, notions, impulse, and perceptions mark man as a being beyond this world, in contradistinction to brutes, which have not such knowledge, notions, &c.

1. The consciousness of existence springs from the evidence, or perceptions, of the senses ; and the notion of death is afforded by the same means.

2. The knowledge of Deity is an attribute of the soul, arising or corresponding with the combined faculty of observing the wonders of creation through the medium of the senses, and of reflecting upon them by the help of the mental faculties.

3. The notion of immortality results from the natural action or propensity of the mind abhorring annihilation, after having once gained the consciousness of existence. The belief of immortality is also strengthened by,

4. The impulse to prayer and worship, arising from human wants and dependencies.

5. The moral sense bears consonance to the eternal truths which transcend human affairs.

6. Glimpses of infinity are afforded to man from the capabilities allotted to him even in this life.

I will proceed to carry forth the results of these attributes.

1. The consciousness of existence, the superior and exclusive distinction of man, calls him immediately to the contemplation of Deity, and consequently to pure impressions; since, along with this consciousness, he cannot help being struck with the idea that he is not the author of his own existence, but that another and far higher power called him forth, from his mysterious nothingness, to life and all its moral purposes. Thoughts too high for human weakness, and which force it to the footstool of the Eternal, for that dependence and support which is the origin of religious sentiments.

Man observes, it is true, through the medium of his senses, which bring him the consciousness of

existence; but he reflects by the agency of mind, or his observations would either perish momentarily, or lead no further, even in their iteration, than mere instinct for the preservation of animal existence, as in the case of brutes.*

The senses of man afford him evidence that all animals, his own species included, die around him, which brings the notion of death, which does not terminate even in the most depraved and obdurate in a simple perception, but ramifies itself into the deepest moral influences of which the heart of man is susceptible; influences from which neither vice or carelessness appear to exempt him, but which penetrate him in spite of himself, tie him to his immortality, and marks him as distinct in attributes from all other animals. Yes, mortal men, deeply as we are all immersed in corruption, it is at this secret trembling, this horror of the

* Brutes observe or receive impressions with their senses; but their impressions are almost purely simple, like distillation uncondensed, which comes to no result; whereas, the observations of man are collected in the retort, and return a different combination of elements.

dread unknown, that we meet in the fellowship of utter destitution, of unquestionable dependence, of the mutual forgiveness of common delinquency, and then brothers and sisters of immortality, of the secret unspoken hope of a glorious resurrection.

This is the natural action of the mind, for there appears to be the same sympathy in the moral as in the physical world; and if nature abhors a vacuum in the one, she also abhors a vacuum in the other. Utter extinction is the most revolting of all ideas; and for a man to have reconciled himself to it, is the last, the ultimate point of depravity. The man who values not existence, can have no motive to adorn it with virtues. Vice must be as welcome to him as virtue, consequently deformity must be as pleasant to him as loveliness, and in such a state the mind cannot long possess distinction between those subjects; but an intellectual depravation or disease ensues, which deteriorates him as an entient in the scale of being: therefore not to value existence is to be without gratitude or love to the Creator, without affection for his fellow-beings, and devoid of the charities of

life—those distinguishing characteristics of a reasoning mind.

2. The knowledge of Deity is an attribute of the soul, arising from the combined faculty of observing the wonders of the creation through the medium of the senses, and of reflecting upon them by the help of the mental faculties, as before observed; for it is at this point of combination that man differs from brutes: their observations, or rather experience, return to the senses, and the things which concern the senses, those of man pass the senses and go on to the mind, the direct tendency of which is to elicit the principle which refers to a future state.

3. The perception of immortality which is the interwoven bond of all man's virtues, and which exemplifies and fulfils the second part of his compound nature. This perception also leads him on to the strong

4. Propensity he has to prayer and worship, especially in youth, from the impressions then received of parental authority; whence it is said that parents are God's vicegerents on earth; and

also in seasons of distress, when his conscious wants and dependencies urge him voluntarily to look for superior aid to what this world affords, and makes him seek his home, and take his place in realms far above. Man alone, of the whole creation, is a worshipping animal, which brings him alone to the feet of his Creator, and of all the high and distinguishing perceptions connected therewith.

5. Nor is it true that the moral sense is given for the mere purpose of ratifying human compacts, and of making existence here go on better. It is unsatisfactory to reason to confine it to the transactions between man and man; mutual convenience might do for that, as in the case of the African savages, who leave their merchandize and money on the sands, and carry on a barter without seeing each other; and yet those very people would rob and murder any stranger from whom they could gain more by robbery than by honesty.

If the moral sense had not a more secret, a more penetrating influence than the bare regulations of civilized life, if it did not carry the appre-

hensions before a more awful tribunal, if it did not attach an hereafter to the present, it would not long serve even in that limited sense. It is in the tacit acknowledgment of an hereafter, that all the responsibility of mankind ultimately rests; for mutual convenience goes no further than the transaction of the moment.

The moral sense certainly contributes to social convenience by a beautiful harmony of the whole, which evidences the superintendence of a Divine mind; but it is not limited to it. How many men act nearly up to the moral sense, or half up to it, while others enact more evil than good; and on all sides what sophistry between ruling passions and the decalogue, and yet the world goes on, that is physically, not morally. The irrational animals prey on all weaker than themselves, have no moral sense, and yet carry on their respective species well enough. What moral sense have the African savages, the Terra del Fuergians, the New Zealanders before the visits of the missionaries, beyond necessary principles of association? and yet they exist as nations; for very slight glimpses of mo-

rality will enable men to herd or congregate together. A high state of the moral sense does not appear to be necessary to this life, but it relates, and is absolutely necessary to another life: for it is hereafter a man expects retribution. When he has committed a bad action, his uneasiness immediately carries him to a tribunal more lasting, more searching than that of this world; for if he undergo the trial of men and be acquitted, he cannot acquit himself. He still dreads that trial, that something to come, which whether he will acknowledge it or not, is an evidence of his immortality.

If it be said I have admitted that tribes of savages exist who possess only a limited or partial moral sense, not capable of the clear attestations of immortality, and that therefore the moral sense does not prove man's relation thereto; I do not admit that any tribes or nations exist so savage as not to have some slight notion of a future state, corresponding to their imperfect code of right. The more recent travellers have discovered that the most isolated and uncultivated tribes possess some

such glimpses; and to that degree of perception must be added their capability of improvement by cultivation: for it is not a fair statement of the question, to take man in any one single view; but surely, in estimating his attributes, he should be taken through all the phases in which he can be found. For if it be said, man without education does not arrive at a clear moral sense, I answer—where does education come from?—From man's own natural powers; that is, the powers of the species, says the Deist. Then if man's own natural powers, that is, the collision of the powers of his race, give him education, and education gives him the moral sense, then the moral sense is natural to him also; springs from his own natural powers, and is a part of his natural attributes. And though every man might not arrive at the same degree of perfection in his inductions, it is sufficient that many should. That perfection is the elicitation of the species; the result and character of the powers of the whole, which constitute the natural attributes of man. For that is natural which is derived from natural means; that is unnatural which is

derived from a supernatural region or agency. But whatever improvement man can bestow on man, is to be considered as belonging to his kind, coming and arising from it, and consequently a property or attribute of his own, because resulting from powers common to the whole; the result of which is shared in common, the whole being capable of seizing and appropriating such result. And in order to draw a legitimate conclusion from any statement, it must be followed to the end; man's moral sense then will not rest upon his savage state alone, but upon the extended view of education also; in which case his attributes as clearly relate to moral sense and immortality in a savage as in a civilized state.

In regard to the diversity of opinions respecting an action being moral in one country, and immoral in another,*—nay, that no two men in the

* As the N. American savages and the Scandinavians killing their fathers when too old for war, the Greeks and easterns marrying their sisters, the New Zealanders devouring their children, the African negroes of the desert starving their children till they are skin and bone, the sacrifices of Moloch, the fattening of human victims

same land agree in their moral code entirely,—that is no objection. All who are educated have a moral sense. This inward appeal to an hereafter, this conscious tact with another world, I contend for as a proof of man's connexion with immortality, and not the degree or form of it.

All the foregoing notions and perceptions have an evident tendency to lead the mind to those profound and vast reflections which present it with glimpses of,

6. Infinity. A subject not suited to the capabilities of a sublunar being, but which carries the mind where it possesses no affinity, no reference unless it there belongs eventually. Infinity opens,—man steps into an immense field, and leaves far behind the circumscribed prison-house of mortality. Where in this world shall he find an

for their idols, by the priest of Panama; and how much are those things worse than the religious persecutions or the horrors of war among the most enlightened nations? all which proves that the moral sense exists as a principle, but that it remains undeveloped as a code, except by the revelation of Christ, because men cannot agree in their definition of such actions.

object on which to exercise this sublime conception? and where would be the justice of giving him these ideas, and of leading his sentient being into those enlarged mansions, to turn him back and close the door upon him? If he is regarded as the mere creature of a generation, without any surviving part, what idea would that afford of an all-wise and beneficent Creator?—Could his wisdom delight in the unmeaning struggles of creatures that lead to no purpose?—could his beneficence accord with bestowing the sense of immortality on beings only to torment them with vain speculations, and then cut them off by a total end? The idea of a man might be found in such sports, but not of a God, whose serious purposes are all useful, and so gracious as to speak that utility.

All those faculties, propensities, wants, and dependencies, consonances, capabilities, knowledge, notions, impulses, and perceptions arising from them would be useless to a perishable being, and consequently unconnected in the scheme of Providence, that is, with the harmony of the whole. The result of the whole must be a beneficial one,

or the whole could not go on. An unconnected part would be an incumbrance, an incumbrance would be an impediment, an impediment would be a mistake, and the Deity cannot err, therefore he does not make any thing unconnected.

And if the Deist say—you have set out connexions in your own mind, but you cannot tell whether those connexions exist in the mind of the Deity ; then I say, that is at once admitting the doctrine of mysteries, for if those connexions are not recognized, explanation cannot follow, and mystery must take place ; and if the Deist can be brought to admit one mystery, he cannot reasonably deny another where reason would be better satisfied with than without it. And if he can be brought to humble himself to the admission of mysteries, it is a long step towards revealed religion ; at any rate it is a decided one against Materialism, the twin brother of Deism.

I will approach a little nearer the notions of the Materialist. The idea that there is nothing in the anatomy of man which warrants the existence of a soul, appears to be one of his grand argu-

ments. Every one knows that man thinks, or **has** a thinking faculty. The brain, which is assigned as the organ of thought, is not a distinct organ for that purpose alone, but is employed also to carry on the animal economy ; and because it is the organ of thought also, thereby proves that man is a compound being ; that is, while he lives he thinks with his body ; but the soul is not the thinking faculty, for the thinking faculty thinks evil as well as good ; but the soul never thinks evil, but always reproaches a man for his evil thoughts, therefore it is a distinct principle to itself, and evidences its immortality by always departing from the things of mortality, soaring above them, and resting nowhere but in regions of eternal purity. The thinking faculty has been found by anatomists, because it is connected with mundane things ; but the soul having no mundane connexions, has no mundane evidence,* and therefore cannot reasonably be expected to be found by the anatomist. Who does not perceive an incongruity

* That is, material evidence, or evidence of its existence in a material form.

in looking for what is incorporeal and immortal in a corporeal and mortal form or appearance? Could the soul be so cut out by the anatomist's knife, then the Materialist might say—Here it is, a perishable mortal substance like the body; but because it is imperishable it is not to be detected by the mortal senses. And if there were such a sensible substantial soul, how could it escape at the decease of the body unperceived? It would be obliged to remain in its corruptible tenement, until a private opportunity: which would produce absurdities upon absurdities, too absurd to mention.

But I shall be asked, Where is the soul in idiots, in cases of syncope?—surely it is in that body whose circulation triumphs over it.

I answer, where was the thinking faculty?—that reappears after temporary suspension, and with equal reason may the soul. It is plain that temporary suspension is not loss of existence; and if the soul can reappear for a moment, it can reappear for ever, so far as suspension affects it.

I suppose I shall be asked, Where was the soul

during that state of suspension? The thinking faculty can be dormant and reappear, because it is an action of the body, and lives and dies with it; but as the soul is to be immortal, it must differ from the body, and have an especial and particular existence of its own, and therefore ought not to partake of, or know any thing of, suspension, because if it can be suspended for one moment, it can be suspended for ever; therefore it ought to be existing during syncope, idiotcy, &c.*

And so it may, only it is not evidenced to the mortal part or thinking faculty; for its evidence being in the thinking faculty, if that be dormant, its mortal evidence is dormant, but not

* It does not appear that the soul is suspended or dormant when the body is in a state of syncope; for as it is a distinct and independent entient, it may be existing apart all the while; but the thinking faculty through which the soul is evidenced, being dormant, makes no record, and therefore the mortal being concludes the soul was dormant also; a conclusion for which there is no direct warrant, being larger than the data from which it is drawn.

necessarily its existence. When the body resumes its action, the evidence of the soul returns.

Then the materialist asks—Is the period during which the evidence of the soul was broken off, wanting in the integrity of its existence to the being to whom it is conjoined; that is, its abstract or absolute, not its conjoined or relative existence?

I think I may safely venture to say, it is of no moment to the argument to determine that question; my position being, that the thinking faculty is the evidence of the soul, not its existence; and therefore the soul may reasonably be conceived to exist apart from it, without losing the integrity of its existence. But these are speculations not necessary, and therefore not salutary to discuss: and whenever I come to a point at which human intellect, or at which my intellect can go no further, I have never any objection to the words—I do not know: but I can tell any living man that he must die to find it out. We know that we have spirit, and that spirit differs

from matter ; but we do not perfectly know what spirit is, whence it came, or the whole of its existence.

That the soul is capable of existing in a dormant state is evident in the case of the vicious man. Vice is the shroud of reason, beneath which it lies entranced and hid. The vicious man can be regarded in no other state than that of insanity; for so soon as virtue is presented to him at some striking point, if it be even that of death, he seems to awake ; new ideas take possession of him, and he becomes another being. That he was able to reason on all other things than right and wrong, and to carry on a systematic existence, is nothing. Most lunatics are consistent enough except at the one point on which their brain has fixed : and for a man to be so far lost to consistency as to overlook the benefits of virtue and the inconveniences of vice, is a clear proof that his reason at that point is eclipsed ; yet it is capable of resuming itself, when conviction of his mistake takes place, which coincides with the existence of the soul, when the thinking faculty is in a dormant state.

It is highly consistent with the wisdom and goodness of the Omnipotent to admit the expectation of man's possessing higher faculties in a future state; in which case, must not a prodigious veil or shroud be removed, and is not this similar to the removing of the envelope, which sickness, insanity, and vice occasion? and does not the parity of the case argue the probability of the one from the certainty of the other?

Life appears to be mechanical and totally dependent on the circulation of the juices. It is the same throughout the animal and vegetable creation. When any of the juices are impeded, a partial or total failure of vitality ensues, according to their importance. The animal and vegetable creation possess this principle in common with man; but having no rational principle, when this dies, they die with it; and since they never were capable of comprehending any thing of futurity, their fate is natural and just. But man, having an intelligent principle and a notion of futurity, cannot be supposed to exist merely in that mechanical routine which the inferior creation does

for the immortal principle is independent of the body, as I shall proceed to show.

The stoutest materialist will not pretend that matter and spirit are the same ; and they must be essentially different, or not different at all ; for all other difference is of no consequence, since it does not distinguish the species. Now difference in essence necessarily implies distinctness or separateness of existence ; for it is impossible to conceive two beings essentially different, having but one existence, though they may unite or meet in one existence ; as every man feels his soul or spirit within him separate and secret from the body, or how could his soul rebuke his passions ? The soul must have its own distinct existence, or it could not have its own essence.

The intimacy of connexion between spirit and matter, has occasioned materialists to imagine that the former is but an appendage or quality of the latter. That intimacy may be as great as they please, but there is no necessity to grant that it should be identity. Impulse, effect, sympathy, &c. are the terms usually employed to express the ac-

tion of spirit upon matter, which all imply the action and notion of two different things. Surely no one need go about to prove that there is such a thing as spirit. Energy all will allow; and call it energy, spirit, or what you will, it shows itself, both in the faculties of the metaphysician and in every part of nature, to be something essentially different from matter.

The existence and immortality of the soul is strictly consonant to the best ideas which can be formed of the Deity. For what purpose could infinite wisdom frame such worlds as this? Is there any thing here worthy in itself to delight a Deity? If man were perishable, like the rest of the earth, would he be worthy of the attention of his Creator? Would not the whole creation, in that case, be a mere toy, unfit for the gratification of so sublime an existant as the Deity?

It is presumable that the fairest matter cannot please him devoid of its purpose, any more than the foulest can displease him. He must in his own fulness be eternally incapable of being affected by any thing out of himself. Therefore, since

he must possess an invincible indifference for all matter, for what purpose could he create worlds merely material, and place in them beings also merely material? It is more reasonable to suppose that his pleasure is in man's intellectual and immortal part, which is combined with matter, that the things of this world may be fitted to his faculties as a probationary scene, which is to fit him in the end for the enjoyment of that freer communication with his author, which he may rationally conclude is to be his portion in futurity.

The works of the Deity are consistent and harmonious with each other, in purpose, character, and effect. Death itself is a strong presumption of immortality; because without immortality death would have no meaning, and the whole creation is full of meaning and consistency. Where did man get the notion of goodness? Surely from Heaven: then Heaven is too good, too wise, too consistent, to give him the painful and revolting notion of death, without making it of use to him; and nothing else but immortality can make it of use. We all know that we all actually die;

and if we do not live hereafter, none of us can say why we ever lived at all. Without a resurrection, death were a hideous discord in the harmony of creation, and this terrestrial and troublesome life without its virtues, its trials, its eternal rewards, unworthy the work and contemplation of a Deity; for if mankind were merely material, to what purpose were the seasons and the succession of generations? One set of men would do as well as another to fill the earth. But if each generation is to have its struggles and rewards, its eternal duration in another life, then individual character becomes reasonably interesting, and worthy the work and contemplation of a Deity; and if we find one notion of life unworthy of a Deity, then it is unworthy of our reasonable belief; and if we find another notion of life worthy of a Deity, then it is worthy of our reasonable belief.

The immortality of the soul, its future rewards and punishments, are necessary to complete our notions of virtue, which would remain disputable and without corollary, were it not for a reference to the

tribunal hereafter, the secret cognizance of which tallies with all our distinctions between virtue and vice, and preserves their indefeasible lien upon the eternal catenation of universal consistency, which is the reasonable evidence of their reality.

And besides, immortality is more reconcileable to reason because it is better for man, and therefore coincides better with the character and designs of Deity, who must be intent on producing the most beautiful result.

The Deist says, that man, or any other works of the Deity, are of no consequence compared with himself; and that it is perfectly reconcileable to reason to admit that he might be created for the pleasure of Omnipotence for a season, and then annihilated altogether; yet it is more rational to conclude, because it carries out further the line of consistency visible through the creation, that the glimpses of virtue, of immortality, of the existence of Deity, of the dread and awe which he cannot help feeling at the thoughts of meeting his Creator hereafter, are intended for his regulation here, in order to improve him as far as

his created nature will admit of improvement, and to fit him for an eternity that will take cognizance of actions done here.

No one will attempt to deny the harmony of the universe, in no part of which is there either negation or redundancy, but a convenient saturation throughout: if then the wisdom of the Deity is so clearly manifest in the material department, is it agreeable to that undeviating consistency which forms the character of his works, that that wisdom should fail at the point which forms the climax of the whole? If Heaven has given man faculties capable of transcending the limits of sublunary spheres, and of darting their energies into infinity, will it deny him all approach to those superior realms of which he would be afforded a vain conception? Do the beasts that perish gaze and sigh at Heaven, or send their secret aspirations to rest on firmer ground and more serene abodes than the storm-rocked earth? Which of the animals is endued with glimpses of enjoyment beyond its own retreat? Is not grass

sufficient for the ox, and is he not contented with it his whole life? are not the fruits of the chase sufficient for the wildest, the most erratic of the beasts and birds, who wander not beyond certain limits, and that for the purpose of fresher food or milder climate? Man alone, unsatisfied and restless, ever in search of something new, something he has not, and which is not in this world, penetrates into other regions, to appease a hunger which is not to be satisfied in this, and to exercise faculties which 'refuse to stop here. Inference.—He alone possesses that sturge, that welling of the soul that is secretly allied to immortality, and which leads him upward and onward, unknown to himself, to a state purer than this. And is it like Divine Majesty to mock with futile gifts the most exalted of his created beings? He is truth and justice itself, and there would be neither truth or justice in such caprice, but a confusion of all ideas of these attributes. We must not cover our ignorance by imputing our own fallibilities to the Almighty.

Without immortality, man, who is favoured with

the highest attributes of all earthly creatures, would find those attributes only calculated to inform him that he is worse off than all the others, while his miseries would be augmented by his power of anticipating it. Nor can those attributes be rationally explained upon any other ground than that of a connexion with futurity. If man perish like the rest of the creation, of what possible use is it to him to have the idea of immortality, of infinitude, or even of Deity? * If it be said that the idea of Deity is useful to guide the morality of this life, it is an inconsistency nowhere else to be observed, to bring the Deity down to make his work go on by making himself known, and at last quitting the object so informed for ever. It is irreconcilable to his goodness and wisdom, or the glimpses of reason with which he has vouchsafed to furnish man—that he should allow him to perceive that his Maker is—that he

* Those mighty ideas are not indispensable to this life, as has been observed before, in the case of savages, who exist as nations with an imperfect moral sense and obscure notions of religion.

exists for ever—that he is infinitely wise and pure—that there is nothing in this world capable of filling the aspirations which he feels after something more perfect—a something which affords him his best notions of virtue and happiness—and then closing the scene upon him for ever ! We all know that he might do so ; he might do still severer things ; but behold the beauty of his works, the order, the consistency of every thing, the serenity of the skies, the everlasting tale of the seasons ; the song of the stars ;—is that a God of caprice or cruelty ? We are compelled to perceive that he is a God of mercy, and that he does not give senses, faculties, propensities, wants, and dependencies, consonances and capabilities, which lead to, and agree with, futurity, and substitute annihilation, which agrees with nothing. It is highly reasonable that the being who is permitted the notion of immortality, who is anxious about it, whose faculties cannot be satisfied within the limits of this world, and whose moral perceptions are always glancing at another, is a temporary sojourner here ; and that his responsibility will be

carried to a future state; and if so, he must of course possess a soul or immortal principle, and find a being who will take cognizance of his actions.

That man does possess faculties of far superior commensuration to his present existence, is not denied by any; neither is the general harmony of the creation doubted, which is compared to a great chain, held by successive links. The sceptic only supposes that God has crowned the whole by placing a spark of intelligence at the pinnacle, which is to be baffled by pursuits inadequate to its powers, and which afford neither rest to its weakness, or satisfaction to its capabilities.

Bold was the titled sceptic who ventured to tell us that we cannot reasonably expect any thing after this life, because we here enjoy so much good, that it is not probable that any more is in store. Admitting, as one view of the question, that every one were really as happy, while shrouded in mortality, as he could wish himself, would not such an evidence of Divine beneficence, be the very foundation upon which his confidence should

rest in looking at futurity? If a man served a kind master, would he not have more reason to depend upon his future favour, than if he served a morose one? If heaven pours down its blessing, should not man hope upon the proof of that bounty, if he be grateful for it, that it will continue? Mortal happiness, where it does exist, is surely no argument against immortal happiness.

But though it may be very natural for a lord to talk of being so full of pleasures that he has no room for any more; the truth is, that for one man who glides through life without those grating attritions that fret and wear against others, it is visible enough that thousands are fully convinced that this world admits of being mended by another. In youth, dependence holds its scourge over us; in maturity, the knowledge of the baseness of mankind makes deep gashes in those wearied energies that struggle up one hill only to gain a view of another; and in age, infirmities come circling round us with arms of iron, and clasp us at last in the painful embrace of death. Is this the being who is to be satisfied with pre-

sent good? Is he not rather compelled by a necessary result to enquire for some more exquisite region, where his immortal faculties may expand, free from those miserable and unavoidable interruptions which are for ever harassing his immortal principle here?

CHAPTER VI.

FURTHER ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT OF
MAN'S IMMORTALITY.

Not having consciousness previous to this life, is no argument against immortality ; since to say that man cannot be immortal because he had a beginning, and had no consciousness previous to that beginning, is to say that God cannot create an immortal being ; and surely man knows not the limit of Almighty Power ; nor is there any thing incongruous to reason in a created being without consciousness previous to its creation, being made immortal ; but on the contrary, such an hypothesis strengthens the doctrine of the Scripture in regard to the second birth, spoken of in the New Testament, which is promised to the righteous, while annihilation is threatened to the unrighteous. This is not arguing from Scripture to reason, but from reason to Scripture.

The immortality of man is not absolute in itself, but being the gift of the Deity, he can take it away when he pleases. I mean not this observation as a metaphysical speculation, which I ever consider as leading only to presumptuous irreligion; and such speculations much rather would I avoid, by the more true and reasonable declaration of my own ignorance; but it may be some tributary explanation of the point above alluded to—of what becomes of the soul in syncope, idiotcy, &c., as well as the present question of—no consciousness previous to this life: that is, it may open our conceptions to the unfathomable wisdom of the Omnipotent, whose sublime and unerring decrees have surrounded our feeble faculties with mysteries, that our souls may be filled with awe and humility; and while we prostrate ourselves in the dust to which we belong, before the inscrutability of his Divine counsels, our conceptions are exalted, and our nature purified by that very inscrutability which brings us to the ground; for it is a great advance in the scale of human reason, for man to clear his perceptions

of his immense distance from the author of his being.

Then the Deist gravely says, the earth is eternal, but man is not so ; yet he allows that the earth had a beginning and that the stars are dying out all around, and being succeeded by new ones. Surely then, upon his own showing, the earth possesses no more claim or affinity with eternity than man. Every thing upon the earth perishes and renews, and its internal mutations are always and evidently going on ; nay, its very position in space varies, and nothing in, or upon, or belonging to it is stable any more than man. And as to its reproducing principle, the elements of man reproduce as well as the elements of the earth ; therefore if the Deist can admit the eternal duration of the earth, what reasonable objection can he have to the eternal duration of the soul of man ? That is, he cannot say the soul is not immortal because it is joined to mortal elements, seeing those elements contain the principle of reproduction upon which he rests his hypothesis of the eternity of the earth. Therefore the immortality of the

soul is not destroyed by the mortality of the body in this sense. The only remaining reason he can give for its mortality is, that he cannot see it after the death of the body; no more can he see the principle of vegetative reproduction in the decay of matter, or detect its operations. To say that seed is visible with its cotyledones and germ, will not evidence the process of vegetation; and that seed has got to become a mass of decomposition before its radicle and mamalial leaves can vegetate; and then man is forced to wait till nature has evolved her mysteries; so that to allow the eternity of the earth, and disallow that of the soul of man because he is united to that earth, is not hearing equal evidence of the economy of nature, and the agency of Providence.

I do not assert that the reproducing principle of the mortal elements is evidence of the immortality of the soul; all I here contend for is, that the decaying principle of mortal elements is not evidence against it. Other evidence has been offered in the foregoing pages of its immortality; and I shall go on to observe, that equally futile

with the last idea is that of the immortality of man residing in his race, not in the individual; but that immortality consists in producing children who are to transmit their parents, that is, their race, to future ages, as a part of themselves, and thus that man never dies. What becomes of immortality to him who has no children?—to him whose children die before him? not to mention the want of identity in this case to both father and son, a want which is diverging further and further every generation, till it resemble smoke that mounts upwards. Identity, the very essence of existence, is in this case lost.* And suppose that all men were sure to have children, and that their children were sure to be succeeded by others, and that the race was thus prolonged or transmitted, to talk of immortality being continued by the agency of mortality is a discrepancy of means to the end which would not be allowed in physics, and there-

* The world has formerly been much more populous than it is now: what has become of the immortality of the absent members? for to say their immortality is gone into the race, is rather too vague.

fore ought not to be allowed in metaphysics, since there is a moral consistency as well as a physical one.

But supposing that the immortal principle could undergo migration or transmigration through mortal fabrics, still it is necessary that those fabrics must be eternally secured in their place; and how can they be secured on a globe which is liable to conflagration, or any other process of destruction of which its perishable materials are evidently made susceptible?

And if the reproducing principle really constitutes immortality, that principle cannot have varied since the first generation; on which grounds whence comes the endless variety of character? Surely the principle that is to immortalize itself in the species has something to do with character; or if it be merely living organised matter which is to be immortalized, horses and asses might do as well as men. And why should matter, which perishes before our eyes, have a more excellent principle assigned to it than mind, which is able

to subdue matter, and acquire an ascendancy over it ?

But if we were assured that God never intends to destroy this globe, and that the race of man may go on to all eternity, immortalizing itself in successive reproduction, yet such kind of immortality possesses no energy of its own, but is a mere appendage to the circumstances of another thing, and that other a mortal or less energy than itself; which goes to make the immortality of man an accident belonging to this perishable globe. No philosophical metaphysician would allow that such consequences could follow such premises; one of the grand axioms of the schools being, that no effect can be bigger than its cause; by parity, no attribute can be greater than the being to whom it belongs, and no quality can be more excellent than the substance from which it proceeds; so surely immortality cannot be caused by what is itself perishable.

That many small beginnings amount to great things is true; but it is not the beginning that amounts by itself, but the succession of beginnings,

every one of which is a new source. A large river springs from a small stream, but that small stream is only a part of the river, and by itself would never have made a large one. Every accessory stream which it receives is as much a cause of the river as the first, so that the aggregate of the river does not exceed the aggregate of its sources or causes. And two different substances will produce a violent alteration upon a third, which neither of them applied separately could effect; but they do not thereby derive any new energies, their energies being only set free by the force of compound attraction, and the effect is here also no bigger than its cause.

Now, if the animal part of man's existence is to survive, that is, to be reorganized after its dissolution, while the rational principle or soul, or whatever Deists may term the immortal principle, is not; is it not making the animal part of more consequence in the eye of the Maker than the rational part? The rational part in that case is not an agent, but an emanation or attribute; and in quality of an attribute, what business can it

possibly have with a sense of right and wrong? for as a quality of another thing it has no responsibility of its own, responsibility being attached to originals.

I have elsewhere said, that as the soul or immortal principle cannot err, but always reproaches a man for his errors, that it is not probable that that is the principle which suffers eternal punishment for the misdeeds of mortality. But that is not all; the sense of right and wrong invariably refers to the tribunal above, everlasting; and here it is that it suits not a perishable being or quality.

CHAPTER VII.

OF IDENTITY AND RECOGNITION.

AMONG the vagaries of Deism, some have imagined that the soul may be immortal, but that it is a spark or emanation of Deity, which he resumes into himself at its dissolution with the body; or perhaps that it floats in space, in a quiescent state, adoring God, and happy in admiring his attributes; but that recognition of other souls is quite out of question. But if the soul has no recognition of other souls, how can it be accountable; since much of its accountability will result from its intercourse with contemporaneous souls? and it would be an incongruity to suppose that it will minutely remember actions, and not the persons to whom those actions relate; nor is any

wise, sublime, or rational view of the Deity, or the rules of his eternal justice obtained by such a supposition.

It is highly unreasonable to imagine that man will be more imperfect in another state than he is in this, seeing that it is his better and immortal part which is to survive, and his dross that he leaves behind ; and as even while in this dross he possesses the power of recognising his fellow-beings, it is wild and anomalous to suppose the more perfect part will be deprived of a faculty hereafter, which the imperfect part possesses here. That would be making earth superior to heaven, so far as that faculty extends. Nor will it explain the case to say, that recognition may be allowed here, because it relates to nothing but sorrow, which suits an imperfect state ; but that it cannot be suitable hereafter, as hereafter ought not to admit of sorrow. Sorrow is the source of morality and wisdom, when the moral of it is rightly sought for, and such fruits are highly suitable to all the perfection of a created being.

Can any man for a moment entertain the idea

that the mind will exist hereafter in its present imperfect state? Is it not rather more reasonable that it will possess superior powers, divested of passions, since human comprehension would not serve for the magnificent subjects of infinity, and human passions would perpetually interrupt such contemplations? Is it reasonable to conclude that the conscious spirit that rejoiced in its identity here, will lose that perception when freed from pain, losses, and death? It is more consistent that it will gain instead of losing any dignity, or perfection of existence, on passing from this circumscribed scene, and therefore it is not making a right use of reason to shut out the evidence of such a presumption. The continual struggles of this life, its transitoriness, together with its painful end, attest that it is probationary; and after having passed through this probation, it is not reasonable to conclude that the Deity will deprive men of attributes of excellence which he even allows them in this preparatory state. And since they are able to recollect themselves, and

others here, they will most likely possess that consciousness hereafter which constitutes identity.

One argument against recognition hereafter is, that nothing here is worthy of regard in heaven. It cannot be below our dignity to carry our recollection into a future state, since the Almighty ordains the whole, superintends the whole, and of course deigns to be conscious of the whole; and surely what is not beneath him, is not beneath his creatures; nor can it be thought too mean, on account of man's earthly nature, to approach his Divine Majesty. He is the same now that he ever will be; and if he vouchsafes to extend his hourly providence over this world and all its humble concomitants, he may reasonably be presumed not to think it beneath him to take cognizance of man when he is made more perfect, or disengaged from his mortal shroud: how else is the Almighty to judge him, to reward or punish him for his actions? To fancy that he shall escape judgment, because it is below the Divine Majesty to trouble himself with his petty individuality, is not listening to the voice which God has

planted in him, which loudly warns him of the moral bearings of all he does, and tells him expressly, that he will have an account to give of the least and most secret of his deeds, the nethermost of his motives.

If the reasonableness of identity be admitted, the notion that the soul is but an emanation of the Deity, resumed into himself at its separation from the body, must be lost.

And immortality without identity and remembrance of this life is an unreasonable idea. The voice of conscience attests that there is a right and wrong. In vain is it to adduce that nations of savages exist, who rob and murder without shame or remorse; that is, who have no sense of right and wrong. Even savages could not subsist under such notions. They have not correct ideas, but they must admit necessary principles, or extermination would ensue. They may occasionally violate them. Murder and robbery, and high-treason are to be met with in the most polished states; but if the sense of right and wrong did

not prevail generally, no society whatever could maintain itself; * therefore, as man is nowhere to be found solitary, it is a proof that the sense of right and wrong is natural, so far as the admission of necessary principles. This sense immediately prepares the way for immortality, and the notion of being accountable; and to whom can a man be accountable for secret actions, for thoughts, but to some superior being?

When these ideas are admitted, identity follows of course; for what is a man to be judged for, but the actions he has done in this life? and if all here is to be forgotten, how can judgment take place?

From all that has been advanced, it appears that which soever way we turn our view, man's physical nature, the moral duties arising therefrom, the nature of the planet he inhabits, his mental

* If there were no sense of right and wrong, a man of a base heart might be as wicked as he pleased with impunity: an inconvenience which no reflecting mind could allow.

sympathies with eternity, all confirm the evidence of his reason in favour of revealed religion, and the rational truths to be found therein; and that no other religion ever made known to him, agrees with his moral perceptions here and his immortal nature hereafter.

CHAPTER VIII.

OF A FUTURE STATE.

THE objection that no future state has yet been depicted, disentangled from a similitude to this, and that no God has been imagined who does not bear a resemblance to man, and that this is to prove that all revelation is a forgery, and in reality taken from mundane conceptions, is far from being entitled to conclusive force.

Were a God and a heaven delineated diametrically opposite to all human allusions, it might satisfy those who cavil at human resemblance, but it would be far from possessing any better claim to inspiration to a reflecting mind; for reverses or opposites are as easy, and go by as simple rules as copies. It was thought easy to pourtray the Brobdinagians after conceiving such a deviation from nature as the Lilliputians, but

that the difficulty lay in hitting off the first deflection; so that worlds and beings, the exact reverse of this, would not free the delineator from the imputation of borrowing his archetype from below. And after producing the direct reverse, degrees and intermixtures of differences would reach an endless variety, without being difficult.

But as it cannot exceed the limits of human genius to imagine a world and beings dissimilar to these, as the intellectual principle, whose sphere is everywhere, whose place is nowhere, it must be acknowledged that the ideas which are given by the inspired writers, are the most intellectual, because the most simple, as containing the conceptions already pictured by the Divine mind in his visible works. And as this mundane system is thus drawn out into higher perfection, that is, it is made the prototype of a higher state, by analogy it may be inferred that this terrestrial existence is also intended to be more perfect in another state.

And darkened as man is by mortal ignorance, how can he determine whether the human simili-

tude be capable or not of Divine perfection? or how shall he disprove that he is an humble model of Divinity? There is nothing repugnant to reason in the idea. The inferior is at as great a distance as the different sort; and he who has the power of creating has certainly the power of fixing his own superiority in any way he shall please, whether by degrees of comparison, or contrariety of species. To imagine that he is forced to distinguish himself in kind only, shows the narrowness of mortal conceptions, ever intent upon wonders and novelties, the sickly food of weak minds; whereas the small glimpses which are vouchsafed of the works of nature invariably attest the astonishing simplicity of their principle,* although

* Simplicity is as necessary a principle of the sublime as magnitude. Complexity, by its very nature, will not admit of a whole, its tendency being to divide into parts, to distract the attention by calling it from the whole to those parts, and thus to prevent the impression of a whole, which diminishes the effect of the whole. Where an aggregate of parts reaches a magnitude that approaches the sublime, the divisions must be obliterated by the effect of their general harmony, or the sublime would not be perceived.

boundless in their ramifications ; and accordingly, the more knowledge we obtain of them, the more simple and uniform we find them ; which simplicity, in affording a view of the whole under one grand scheme, produces a sublimity which had been much impaired by multiform and complex divisions. All which shows, that it is no argument against the religion of Jesus Christ, or revealed religion, that it has not soared into novelties ; but, on the contrary, rather has kept the sublime simplicity of unity with the creation before us.

CHAPTER IX.

OF PRAYER.

IF Deism be not reconcileable to reason, it can hold no place on any ground; and as the reasonableness of a thing is best known by its effects, let the consequences of this doctrine be fairly examined; that is, let it be gone through.

It drives man to a still greater distance from his Maker than even ignorance itself, by setting up the barricadoes of false reasoning. If religion have any object at all, any consistency, it must be to bring man nearer to his Creator than he would be without it, for what other end could it have? But Deism drives him away; tells him it is absurd, nay impious, for so insignificant a being as himself to disturb the majesty of heaven by his appeals; that the Deity is engrossed by far sublimer objects, and that his petty cares and wants

are all too trifling to constitute a part of Almighty Omniscience. So that he ought to go on to the end of life, knowing that there is a God who created him, ordained every thing and every other being that surrounds him, and yet he is to believe that he never is to approach that God, because he is too minute an object to merit Divine attention.

This is a very human notion of Divine Majesty, to suppose that God is so engrossed by any thing which man considers as magnificent, either his own happiness, or the contemplation of his own vast designs, or the general care of the whole, precluding individuals. The first would be the case with human notions of splendour, which is generally made to consist in circumstance; and the latter would be the lot of mortal faculties, which cannot embrace every thing. But the peculiar attribute which God has vouchsafed to communicate of his superiority, is the complicated intricacy of his designs, which ramify their detail throughout an infinite creation in innumerable

directions, with surprising simplicity of conformity in principles. And, grand as the universe is, it is in the little that God is greatest; in the worlds within worlds. If the infinite classification, genera, and species, from the sun to the animalculæ that floats in his beam, be considered; if the varieties of each, the relation of the whole, the combination of causes, the diversification of effects, the unbroken chain which runs throughout be contemplated, how worthy they must be allowed to be of the greatest admiration of infinite wisdom, which stopped not at a mere outline, but filled up that outline with colours and shades too diversified for mortal comprehension! Not only in the universe, but in the atoms which fill the universe, it is that the infinity of the Divine mind is testified. The rude peasant of the north hews down the immense forests of Norway, and floats his stupendous piles over the waves of the Baltic; but the artificer divides, fashions, and smooths, by repeated details which produce all the varied mechanism of art. None of his works are vast; but is not his ingenuity

superior to the northern peasant? And so is the wisdom of God as great in the care of the parts as in the design of the whole.

And if he deemed it worthy of his majesty to descend to the formation of so insignificant a being as man, it can be no deterioration of that majesty to stoop to the care of that being. Shall God give man wants, and then be too high to take cognizance of those wants? Shall He who formed the grain of sand, and the reptile that crawls upon that sand, not deign to look on man, the most intelligent of all his creatures, whom alone he has endued with knowledge of himself? Shall He lead his reason up to the throne of mercy, only to tell him he is too insignificant to address that mercy? How can it be beneath the Most High to look down upon man? Was it beneath him to form his limbs, his temperament, his talents, his whole frame and constitution, out of which his actions and destinies arise? Nay, when he has done with his worn-out, feeble dust, old, perhaps diseased, devoid of grace, and hidden in the horrors of decomposition, does not the Deity deign

carefully to attend to it, to the least particle of it, to gather it together again from this last, lowest state, and to recombine it with new life and beauty? and is it more beneath him to throw an eye on this dust while organized, living, acting, worshipping, glorifying him who called it into being? If the world is full of organization and life, to an incalculable extent of microscopic minutæ, not one atom of which could move of itself, or call itself into existence, is it more worthy of the Deity to devise, form, animate, superintend, and dispose of this vast multitude with their lasting succession, than to regard that principle which he has made able to recognise himself? Does he tell man that he is, and then refuse all communication? Does he give him aspirations and also weaknesses, which call upon him as their only resource, and then shut his ears? And if it be said, that he vouchsafes to extend sufficient care to the affairs of man, but that he is not to trouble him with prayer, to what purpose should he have endued him with an especial knowledge of himself? what end could such knowledge answer, if

he is for ever to be banished from all communication with Divine mercy? He knows there is a God, he must not even speak to him; he knows that he takes care of his affairs, he must not presume to thank him! What sort of religion is this? or is there any religion at all in it?"

The love of God, that is, the love of all that is good, is the essential end of all religion; and since he has been pleased to form man in such a manner that he cannot love what he is to esteem himself for ever unworthy to approach, it never could be God's intention that he should be deemed so unworthy. What is love but an attraction, a desire to be near? Is it reasonable to suppose that God would have made it the welfare and duty of man to have loved him, if he meant to banish him from him? If love is an attraction, and if he is to love God, then is he not to come to him, to pour out his soul before him, and to rejoice that he is allowed to know his Maker, and that he is allowed to serve him in reality and consistency, and not in contradictions.

Here the effects of Deism appear inimical to the

evidence of reason, which requires that man shall have such a religion as shall bring him to his Maker, to curb those passions which are too violent for his unassisted energies, to support those weaknesses which would overwhelm his frail reason, and to pardon those faults which his own merits could never atone.

Mortal prayers are an impertinent interference with Deity, says the Deist, whose eternal counsels go on without regard to the wishes of man. The eternal counsels of Deity go on uninterrupted, but that is no argument against the propriety of the prayers of man. Men's prayers have not the power to interrupt the Deity, nor can any Deist prove that he is interrupted by prayer. If the prayer of the humble be granted, and a temporal calamity averted, it is of course agreeable to the providence of the Deity that it should be so; and so far from being an interruption to his providence, it is a display of it for man's benefit. But if the Deity do not directly grant his humble prayer, and he have no sensible manifestations by which to discern that his prayer is acceptable, it is still a holy

exercise of the heart, leads it away from vice, disposes it to virtue, and in the end will bring that peace which will be an unspeakable reward:

Is not man weak ? therefore dependent ; and shall he not naturally, rationally, and by the obligation of duty, attach himself, and pay homage to that being upon whom he knows that he depends ? If he had a master upon earth, would he not look up to him and perform his will, that he might support and protect him ? and shall he not do the same ; shall he not address, propitiate, and throw himself, his heart, and his affairs, before his heavenly Master ?

But if the notions of Deism are examined, they will be all found to have the same tendency, viz. to detach man from his Maker, to darken his notions of futurity, and thereby inevitably loosen his moral ties, and prepare his bewildered mind to relinquish and deny the influence of virtue. There may be well-intentioned men led into this error, but Deism itself chills piety and deadens virtue, consequently debases the mind, renders it unfeeling and sordid. Christianity makes one family of

man; tells them they are all brothers and sisters, struggling together towards the same point, at which they are to meet, to receive the common allotment of their common frailties; and that the portion of each will be best propitiated by forgiving each other. Deism has no brothers and sisters, no future bond, no holy charities, no Christian forgiveness; but in cold selfishness and haughty presumption, shuts up the heart to wither alone, without love to sweeten its turbulence, or hope to heal its errors.

CHAPTER X.

OF THE EXISTENCE OF DEITY.

THE book of nature is surely sufficient for any human being to behold in it convincing evidence of the existence, goodness, wisdom, and superintendence of a God : and awful is that infatuation which can survey the amazing sublimity of the designs, and the wonderful organization of the whole creation, and doubt the Divine Author thereof. As to cavilling for physical demonstrations, all analogical and synthetical reasoning might be cut off by the same objection. At the same time it is a notorious disease of infidelity, that while it rejects the obvious consonances of reason, it accepts the wildest extravaganzas in their place; as whenever the natural affections or the legitimate ties of life are abandoned, worse and inferior objects are substituted. It has been known in the case of unnatural mothers neglecting their

offspring, and lavishing their endearments on dogs and monkeys. The Deist who cannot find a Deity in the design and organization of matter, finds one in the inert substance of matter itself, and says that eternal duration resides in its reproduction.

There is no existence without identity, and matter is never reproduced in its verisimilitude, but ever and ever with distinctive peculiar character, from the whole human race to any two leaves upon any tree; consequently it wants the first essential of an existant in its series as a whole, or reproduction, viz. identity.

It will not satisfy rational enquiry to say, that each succession of matter is not Deity, but that the whole duration of matter, comprising its reproducing principle, is Deity. For what purpose then is individual character, which every created thing, animate and inanimate, possesses? Surely character is more assimilate to a sentient existant than mere substance. It is true, that both united constitute matter of the present moment, but not matter of eternity; because individual character cannot be

communicated to the whole, for then would it lose its individuality, and, consequently, its identity, and, consequently, its existence: for all those things go together, and, in order to prove the rationale of a dogma, it need only be followed out to the end to ascertain the whole of its agreements and disagreements.

Individual character also disappears, and a change is substituted with a new succession of beings; which does not answer to the idea of Deity, whose character must be unchangeable and eternal.

Matter exists, it is true, but it has no excellence of its own except the reproducing principle. It has no qualities, but only accidents; it has no motion of itself, but is capable of motion, or of being acted upon. In itself it possesses a *vis inertia* which renders it invincibly indifferent to rest or motion. It will not gravitate unless placed in a medium more attenuated than itself; therefore, if it merely exists, has no qualities, and is acted upon, how can it be Deity? Deity implies creation, government, duration, omniscience in itself, or in

its own excellence : how should that create which created not itself, but is perpetually being created? How can that govern which is incapable of action, but is acted upon ? And what similitude has that which is always changing, always dying, and being renewed with that which is eternally unchangeable, everlasting, complete and finished in itself?

And, if matter be Deity, what is mind, and the omniscience of Deity ? its source, its laws ? and what is the catenation, the rationale of that stupendous fitness of one thing to another, through a mysterious origin, a toilsome existence of trials ? and also the end or moral of those trials, which inevitably develope aspirations diverse from, and far above matter or any of its sympathies ; which aspirations lead to regions where eternity, spirit, and purity reside, and where nothing applies to matter ? and having reached this conception, the something within then seems at home, at rest, and satisfied, which it never was, never can be here, while embodied in matter.

What has such a law as this to do with matter ? and that it is a law is proved by its universality.

Where is the mind that has not turned, often turned, its secret appeals from this world to another? When bereft of friends, persecuted by enemies, more especially if misfortune originate in crime, where can the sufferer turn for consolation but to heaven? Hard, indeed, must be the stony heart and the seared bosom that appeals not spontaneously to his Father above in some of those great afflictions that are the common heritage of humanity; the tie of kindred among mortals, and which, in being above our own power to remedy, or that of our fellows to assist us, are the true links with our Creator, whose beneficence alone can save from despair. Yes, men of the dust, those great sorrows that are beyond all earthly relief, evidence the existence of a God, and plainly point to a reliance upon him, by whom alone they can be medicated.

And in the eternal harmony of his universal laws he gives not dependencies and impulses in mockery, but with the voice of mercy speaks to reason, and tells man that the least details of his everlasting appointments shall all agree with their mighty end.

There certainly are minds so unyielding that they refuse to turn to heaven, even under its severest visitations ; but they cannot shuffle off at all times certain impressions which strongly connect themselves with their dependence upon that last, that final, that ultimate resource. They may fly from those impressions as below the dignity of their reason, or rather their presumption; but when the mutations of their earthly possessions, and the ingratitude and treasons of man have made them feel the futility of that reason, they cannot help being pursued by those impressions, imperfect, perhaps, and undeveloped, but sufficient to attest the force of that tie which holds mortals in communion with their God.

The physical fitnesses of the material creation are as admirably adapted to the proof of the existence of Deity as those mental sympathies. To say that man cannot believe in any thing he cannot behold with his mortal faculties, I have before said, is not a philosophical conclusion, as no inductive reasoning whatever could take place under such a position. All materialists allow that man receives

ideas through the impressions of his senses ; and what are ideas but inductions of reason ? and if inductive reasoning from the impressions of the senses be admissible, reasoning from analogy cannot be excluded, for analogy is nothing more than induction a little more extended, but legitimately, as coming from the same source—the medium of the senses : and synthesis is analogy through the same means. Therefore to say that man cannot believe with his natural faculties things not evidenced to his natural faculties, is to disallow all the acts of the mind, and to disprove the very assertion itself, that he cannot believe evidences not evident to his natural senses. How does he know he cannot believe, but by analogical comparison and inductions ? for by the same rule that I must prove he can believe, he must prove he cannot believe ; and I fancy, that if the data are fairly stated, the most reasonable, consistent, and fit induction will be found to be, that mankind can all believe in their natural state in the inductions of reason from things, or existents not evidenced to those senses ; that is invisible, intangible, inaudible.

Behold the ethereal arch with the heavenly bodies moving therein ; their magnitude, beauty, and regularity, and say whether they are not worthy to be evidence of a Deity ? and yet that sight is obtained by the evidence of the natural senses. View with the natural senses the anatomy of any one animal ; the powers assigned to each part so wonderfully agreeing with their mode of life, and refute the induction, if it be possible, of the design, economy, and government of the whole creation, and of its evidently and undeniably being the work of one mind. It is to be supposed that the materialist does not feel so clear and full conviction of these evidences ; but his own momentary impressions, and even his doubts, are sufficient. He cannot be entirely at ease with the bare barren theory of Atheism. It is a stone on which nothing grows, but which leaves him languishing in the famine of many a yearning after futurity ; many a gnawing doubt of paternal providence, and many an unsatisfied desire in the emptiness and evanescence of these mortal scenes, sufficient to give him fugitive

and latent perceptions, from the evidence of his senses, of his dependence on a Deity, and by the analogy of his reason, of his communion with him, and consequently of the existence of Deity.

CHAPTER XI.

OF THE DISPENSATIONS OF THE DEITY.

HERE I might adduce Parnel's beautiful poem of the Youth and the Hermit, for to the unreflecting, the ways of Providence are very mysterious, but those who diligently seek the moral of them will often find it. Infidelity finds it not, it is true, but argues against the superintendence of Providence, because afflictions are equally dealt to the just and the unjust in the eyes of man ; but then his eye sees not far. Afflictions may visit the just to correct some small and secret failing, which hindered him from perceiving the full lustre of truth at that point, and so far left him without the power of appreciating true happiness. After he has come out of the crucible of his sorrows, he is as gold refined ; and if afflictions are not always to correct sin and error, they are a fine and valuable

preparation for death, the dark and painful hour that inevitably awaits all life, and as certainly snatches man for ever from all human and all earthly enjoyments. And what can so well teach him to seek aid and enjoyment elsewhere as that correcting hand that denies pleasures here ?

Mere physical good is unworthy the consideration of the spiritual part of his nature, his greatest happiness being in moral purity, not physical enjoyment, and moral purity is best extracted from trials; created beings being too weak and imperfect to arrive at it in a more direct form, or, at least, it is evidently destined for man through that medium by the whole agreements of the scheme of life, the wisdom of which he may not question.

Sorrow is man's truest wealth. How delusive is prosperity, for it consists of perishable things, whose very nature it is, to make themselves wings and flee away. And every thing is so ordered here, that good is to be sought out of evil, because this is a state of trial and not of perfection ; therefore as fire refineth, so does affliction ;

and seeing the weakness of human nature so prone to presumption and selfishness in prosperity, an ancient philosopher said, "How miserable is the man who has never drank but of the cup of prosperity!"

So that the afflictions of the righteous are no argument for a blind chance of fortuitous events; for those very afflictions in purifying the spirit, become the greatest treasure of the pious and humble, and in this imperfect state, how know perishable beings that afflictions are not highly useful in enabling them to arrive at a clearer conception of happiness hereafter by contrast, and that they are unable to attain to that high conception without experiencing that contrast?

The same argument applies to the mystery of the permission of vice, the view of which exemplifies and corrects man's moral code, by showing him more clearly what it is he ought to avoid, and by a display of the horrors of bad actions, and the evil consequences that follow them, and also of the infinitely innumerable steps by which he deviates into the commission of them; the minute

and insidious approaches they make, and the immense and awful havock they bring to his morals and happiness in the end ; like a giant in his sleep, whom he fancies he can touch and stroke, who wakes at last in armour and in thunder, when he can no longer retreat.

The beauties of virtue are rendered more conspicuous by such definition, and though it might be objected, that it suits not the notion of a Deity to create some beings for destruction in order to benefit others, yet as all are invited to repentance and promised pardon on that condition, there is no individual hardship in example being a warning ; and the permission of vice is further necessary to free will. If there were no such things as vice and misery, there would be no need of death and resurrection : for if man began and continued always in the same state of perfection, the same state of existence would be appropriate to him ; but if he struggle through many trials, sometimes failing, then repenting, and finally obtaining reconciliation with heaven, it is very agreeable to reason that he should change the scene of those

trials for a happier, and more enduring state of existence. The shortness of this life accords with its being a state of trial, and makes the whole phenomena of life harmonize with reason; but life and all its purposes remain a sad mystery, full of discrepancies and useless difficulties without the admission of a future state of reward to the righteous, and of punishment to the wicked, which, of course, must come from the dispensations of the Deity. And if reason will help to show that the Creator is good and wise, and that the seeming disagreements and disorders of this life, resulting from vice, are reconcileable to clear and consistent notions of the justice of his eternal government, surely such an exercise of the faculties is beneficial, reasonable, and becoming this state of existence, and salutary to its true interests.

CHAPTER XII.

OF THE CONNEXION BETWEEN THIS WORLD
AND THE NEXT.

MAN is able to trace a connexion and agreement throughout the whole physical department of this world and the worlds which surround it, in their conformation, their adaptation to each other, their minutiae, and the gradations by which they rise from the least and most imperfect to the largest and most perfect ; so also in the moral world, from the humblest of its duties to the worship of the Deity. And can it be supposed the universality of that connexion is to stop between man, the soul of man, and that final abode whither all his best thoughts continually and universally tend ! It is neither visionary, speculative, nor impertinent to look beyond this transitory life, which is inevitably flying far away every moment, to that more

enduring home which calls all created beings away with a thousand voices every hour, and the manifestations of which are so many and so strong as to render it a most imperative and reasonable study.

There are various degrees of virtue and intelligence conferred upon the individuals of the human species ; in some those qualities are so evidently developed that they appear even in this life fit aspirants for the company of the blest ; in others, the soul is so sunk in grossness that it is difficult to conceive that they are intended for any thing more than a mere earthly existence. But it is not revealed how soul is developed after this life. It may be that the more virtuous and intelligent are more matured, and consequently have less alterations to undergo after parting from the body ; and that the gross and vicious are more shrouded, enveloped, and immature, and so may undergo a greater alteration after being freed from the body.

It is my opinion, but I only offer this as matter of opinion, that there is a closer connexion between the best beings of this world and the sympathies

of the next than is generally imagined. I suspect that whatever man elicits by the combination of true principles is an approach to truth. I have heard others say, that they considered discoveries in science, as the mariner's compass, the circulation of the blood, gunpowder, the telescope, &c., as direct inspirations or divine communications. Man's most pious and virtuous thoughts are most probably true chords ; nay, mathematical truisms are not unlikely to have their ratification above, as also the true proportions of architecture, such as produce musical sounds and enlarged vibrations, and especially the true chords of music, because their vibrations immediately apply to the mental sympathies, and are consequently less mundane, and their truth is proved by their correspondence with the song of birds, which is the work of the divine mind.

I do not see the reasonable necessity of deeming every thing here so very base and unlike every thing above that it is unfit to be beheld by superior being. The earth and all its productions are the conception and work of a divine mind, and are

consequently sublime and beautiful. That divine mind has graciously communicated a spark of his divinity to man, and thereby he occasionally touches some of the chords of truth, which are most likely worthy to be considered above, for there is no just analogy for believing what is true here is false above, either in physics or ethics so far as concerns principles; for the true principles of physics are the conceptions of the divine mind elicited to mortals; and it is reasonable to suppose that he who prays sincerely to his Maker is actuated by a spirit which is acceptable even to his Maker; and is it not acceptable for its truth, that is, its purity, humility? If, then, man can touch one true chord, why not another and another? I do not mean to say that he has the full truth on any point so clear as it is above, but it is my opinion that truth is approached sometimes to a certain degree or extent, and that that degree is most likely worthy to be received above, for it is not reasonable to imagine that any particle of truth is rejected or neglected by its Fountain. Truth is in unity with itself, and consequently

sympathises and recognises all its degrees and ramifications.

Nothing but vice excludes mortals from divine sympathy, that is the recognition of truth. Vice is falsehood, virtue is truth; consequently vice banishes them from heaven, from truth, from knowledge, from happiness; and also virtue clears the understanding,* brings it nearer to truth, to contentment, to heaven. And if virtue were steadily pursued in preference to all other objects, an incalculable improvement would take place in the faculties, the lot, and happiness of mortals.

If it be objected, that it is too presumptuous in mortals to think themselves worthy of divine sympathy, and that it does not accord with their probationary state, making them fit for those sympathies in the end; I answer, that the better men are the humbler they will be, as humility is, and ever will be, among the highest perfections of created beings; and the more such a being comprehends of purity or perfection, the more sensible

* I have treated this subject more largely in another work about to be published.

will he be of that truth. Did not Plato say that the more he knew, the more he found that he knew nothing?

These are speculative evidences which must be left to opinion; but of moral agreements evidencing their connexion with eternity in their ultimata, there can be no doubt; for what else is the voice of conscience but the citation of the tribunal of another world? Whenever mortals feel pity for each other, or the incitement of generous sympathies, or fear of the moral consequences of their actions,—and who hesitates not at his first step in vice?—it is the mental sympathy, the hold with Deity. Here the corollary of all the foregoing chapters might be repeated, viz. that all man's physical conformation leads him on to his moral obligations and duties, the end of which passes this world and demands their reference to immortality.

The ridicule to which infidelity so continually resorts appears to be its principal weapon. With a view of making a confusion of the argument, the deist asks, how man can have the presump-

tion to think that he is the only being destined for immortality, and that it is not reasonable to think that horses, for instance, are to suffer so much from man and have no reward hereafter. He may be told that horses suffer no more than other animals, all of which are in their several respective classes food for those stronger than themselves. No animal exists without enemies, which make its life perpetually precarious; and when it escapes its foes, its food is never obtained without toil and contest; therefore, if suffering be a claim to immortality, the whole creation has that in common, and as horses, &c. have none of the faculties, consonances, propensities, capabilities, dependences, knowledge, perceptions, ideas, notions, that human beings have, reason fails to recognise the evidence of their claim to immortality, the links of conformity with an hereafter being wanting.

All the propensities, passions, and actions of the animals centre in the immediate objects and their immediate vicinity necessary to their momentary wants, and these being gratified, sleep is the next state they naturally fall into, as though they had nothing more to do with ex-

istence. They will sometimes play, but it appears like mere animal exercise, necessary for the purposes of growth or digestion. They will have favourites, friendships they cannot be called, because they admit not of sacrifices except to their own offspring, in which case nature seems to observe her own laws, the continuation of the species being involved in its care. But the mind of man is never at rest, but leaps from object to object, transcending the limits of this world, and forms combination, and produces results which he reiterates through life, and finally transmits them to posterity. It is at this point of combination and transmissions of ideas that man differs from brutes. Their observations, or rather experience, return to the senses, and the things which concern the senses; those of man pass the senses and go on to the mind, the direct tendency of which is to elicit that principle which belongs to a future state and a power above.*

As to the justice of rewarding the sufferings of

* This is not a bare repetition of the same idea which has certainly been used before, but a recapitulation for the purpose of pursuing another of its ramifications.

animals, I forbear to adduce what scripture points out as the moral use of them to man, to observe that natural reason directs him to draw a lesson from the general misery and corruption of all sublunar objects and affairs, which is to enable him to disentangle his affections from them, and to humble him by a display of mysteries, which in being above his comprehension, is to prostrate him at the feet of his Maker.

CHAPTER XIII.

OF MAN'S PRESENT AND FUTURE
EXISTENCE.

MAN consists of three principles ; his pure and immortal part, which never errs, viz. conscience ; his evil principle or passions, which almost always err ; and his thought, or identity, without which the others could not attach to him. If there is to be punishment, and our self-condemnation of vice assures us there is, what is it that is to be punished ? Not the conscience or soul, which never consented to sin. And are we to suppose that the evil principle or passions which resulted from matter, and acted upon it, is worthy to be associated with the pure principle hereafter ? Not eternally ; for being the result of matter, where, perhaps, there is no matter, that is, not the forms

and objects of matter we struggle through here, it will have no reference, no occasion to exist. But as the pure principle was conjoined with it here while incurring sin, and suffered sorrow for that sin, so may it be conjoined for a season hereafter until that sin be expiated. For sorrow is not unworthy the pure principle, that is, righteous sorrow, for our Saviour suffered that, and the fruits of it are so noble and so pure, that it is worthy of divinity.

When the evil principle is sufficiently castigated, it will be subdued; when it is subdued, it will be extinct, and man then will consist of the pure principle and the intellectual principle, combined with rectified feeling or passion, for all passions are not sinful, as all those which have kindness and which prompt us to help others.

It will be objected, that this savours of the Catholic doctrine of purgatory. If the Catholic doctrine of purgatory ended here, and led to no more impurity, it would not be so objectionable as it is. I am not fond of speculative discussions,

and have no hesitation in avowing my own incompetency to determine such matters ; the only reason I go into them at all is to meet still wilder speculations, and to strike out a path which others may follow with more success.

CONCLUSION.

I SHALL not in the few remaining pages enter into historic or critical evidence, that being already done by far abler pens than mine, but will just take a cursory glance at some remarks which have fallen in my way promiscuously.

“ It is curious to observe how the doctrines of Christianity sprang from the tail of heathen mythology. (Volney’s Ruins of Empires.) Revelation was undoubtedly preceded by many glimpses before it came in its last form, like the sun darting through the intervals of a cloud, which at length passes away and leaves the fulness of meridian day triumphant. The Jews, the Arabians, the Egyptians, the Hindoos, the Mexicans, &c. all had traditions of a Messiah, a Trinity, and a flood, more or less faint; which proves no more than that the light glimmered before it became effulgent, and after all it is not so bright as to exclude

infidelity, the intention being plainly not to supersede faith and humility, and the diligent struggles of piety, which are to win their way in this probationary state ; but to hold out hope, to exercise patience and constancy, and to carry on the business and duties of this life as the fittest preparation for the next. Therefore that tail of the heathen mythology was like the gray dawn of the morning which awakes the coming day.

With an ingenuity which might do honour to science, were candour added to it, the deist endeavours to invalidate the truth of Christianity, by making it appear to be irreconcilable to the actual age of the creation, as deducible from natural phenomena. The geologist finds in the deposit of vegetable and animal fossils beneath numerous strata, a proof that more time must have been required for the formation of those strata than the Mosaic account assigns. Is it then certain that those strata went regularly on by the usual accretions of time ? Could not the convulsions of an universal deluge occasion such a mixture of elements, subsiding according to their specific gra-

vities generally, but particularly embodying heterogeneous matter as should amount to the observed number?

If the superincumbent strata were the regular and usual work of time, why are fossil remains so irregular? why do they not appear every where alike? and why do they not go on forming instead of being always ancient, always very unequal, as though the animals had struggled into their situations in the last efforts for life? And if the accretion of strata be the regular work of time, why are fossil remains ever embedded at all? The animals of the desert in these days decay and perish where they lie, and do not become fossils, therefore fossils do not appear to be a regular and natural, but an accidental formation, and in that state they agree better with the philosophy of the deluge than with the philosophy of the deist.

But the sea regularly retires so many inches in so many thousand years, leaving those parts of the earth dry which once were covered by the ocean, and sublaying those which once were dry. Suppose that it does, that proves nothing of the

age of the world, as no human record reaches beyond the period assigned by Moses. And though the ocean may retire thus slowly, no man knows that it has shifted further than in proportion to the Mosaic account; for as to the basin of Zahara and its fossil marine deposits, the deluge will as satisfactorily account for these phenomena as time, and more philosophically, because of their regularity. And as to the coast of China gaining from the sea, it wants more correct dates.

In judging of the changes undergone by the surface of the globe, time must not be computed - by the actual progress or recession of the sea on any particular coast, without considering the nature of that coast. The greatest alterations in the face of the earth are in the south of Russia, Tartary, and Egypt, which countries are all low and, of course, have a sandy soil. In such situations alterations will go on with a rapidity so disproportionate to those of more rocky and elevated situations, that those who reason from the one and those who reason from the other separately will not be able at all to agree in the age of the world. The

subjoined quotations will show that the world has not undergone quite such extensive alterations as some hasty observers may infer.

“The two promontories, one on either side of the Grecian fleet, as it was stationed at the mouth of the Scamander, were two necks of land, whose distance might well admit of Agamemnon’s voice, when he called from the centermost ship, being heard to the two extremities. The objection, therefore, which with reference to this circumstance was urged against the distance of Sigeum from Rhotæum is superseded.” (Clark’s Travels, p. 205, vol. 3.)

“The Aïanteum, or tomb of Ajax, still remains, answering the description given of its situation by ancient authors, and thereby determining the extent also and positions of the naval stations of the Greeks.” (Ibid. p. 202, vol. 3.)

“In order to escape this, ships from the Archipelago, bear up the straits till they are able to see all the windmills stationed upon the brow of the promontory. Two of the tombs mentioned by

Strabo appear very conspicuously in that point of view." (Ibid.)

The depth of various deposits in the earth, and even the shifting of the poles, are all accountable for by the concussions and emotions which the earth must have undergone at the flood. And as for the fact of the flood, it is also attested by the concurrent testimony of Pagan as well as Christian writers; the alteration of a name from Noah to Deucalion being of little moment.

But how are the remains of extensive, noble, and scientific architecture, buried under ground on the continent of America and Africa, to be accounted for? Architecture, which bears the stamp of a high state of civilization, which requires ages to reach, and that too in lands which have lost all traces of that civilization which, of course, would require many ages more.

I consider that the deluge will philosophically account for these things; and I further consider that all traces of civilization have not disappeared from these regions. The Mexicans wrote in hiero-

glyphics at the time Hernan Cortez visited them, and preserved the archives of their empire, which is not the effort of savage life. They understood the art of government and architecture, and travellers say they have met with traces of a highly polished colony in the heart of Africa.

“ It is remarkable, that in some places three or four steps, and even the foundation of walls, are now beneath the surface of water. Various modern travellers describe submerged ruins at Aboukir and at the Pharos of Alexandria, on the opposite shore of the Mediterranean, and, by a curious coincidence, in nearly the same longitude as Kakara. To account for these, and similar facts, some philosophers have supposed the level of the sea has gradually risen ; but were that the case, we should undoubtedly have observed the same appearance along the rest of the same coast. A considerable rise and fall is produced on the sea by the prevalence of the north or south winds ; the former last for many weeks in summer, and when violent, lower the surface of the sea upwards of two feet. This circumstance would have obviously afforded the

opportunity of laying the foundation and forming the steps at Kakara." (Beaufort's *Karamania*, p. 19.)

And as to the decision of those learned Hebraists the other day in London, who met to applaud each other's discoveries, if they had learned a little further, they would have found that the Hebrew language is indefinite as the Chinese, and that though those very profound doctors found an enlarged meaning might be attached to some Hebrew terms of quantity, which they thought ought to give an enlarged age to the world; they might have found also, that in the various versions to which all eastern languages are liable, that it would have been as prudent to have collated the rational or true meaning with the sense of the whole or preceding and succeeding passages, which alone can give a translation of figurative language worthy of acceptance.*

* See Landaff's remarks and explanations on a similar point.

RECAPITULATION.

I COME now to give the total in one view of the various items which have been given before in detail, viz. that man's existence here is a strange and dismal mystery, having no satisfaction in this world even in mundane gratification, and as possessing faculties, propensities, wants, and dependencies, consonances, capabilities, which bring him the attributes of consciousness of existence, notions of death, knowledge of Deity, notions of immortality, impulse to prayer and worship, moral sense, and perceptions of infinity, all which have no relation to this world, consequently none to man himself, if he be merely a member of this world ; and as we are able to observe the most exact consistency throughout the works and designs of Providence, and as the Christian revelation will reconcile all difficulties, and afford a rational solution of man's existence here and hereafter, reason

must agree to this strong presumptive evidence, which is left presumptive to answer man's condition here, which is probationary; and had this evidence been more explicit, it would not have accorded with the trials necessary to a being in that state.

This view alone can clear the mists which envelope mortal faculties, and which render man either barbarously savage, as the Goths, or superficially presumptuous, as the Greeks, who sought a cunning disputation in all metaphysical topics, and who became so depraved in their taste that they preferred disputation to elucidation. I have never read much on the subject, and, perhaps, may not have advanced any thing in these brief and simple pages remarkably new, or remarkably profound, but one argument may strike one mind, and another may strike another, and as I have not gone into theological problems, I fear not to offer the plain straightforward suggestions, which result from the evidence of natural reason in support of those everlasting truths, which relate to the momentous interests that connect man through all

his weaknesses, his blindnesses, his passions, his degradations, his mournful corruptions, which end in impairing his reason and destroying his happiness ; to those ineffable radiations of heavenly counsels, which float in light everlasting and everlasting, whose date was in worlds before all worlds.

FINIS.



